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1



**HISTORY**  
**OF**  
**DISSENTERS,**

**FROM THE**  
**REVOLUTION**

**IN 1688, TO THE YEAR 1808.**

**IN FOUR VOLUMES.**

---

**BY**

***DAVID BOGUE & JAMES BENNETT.***

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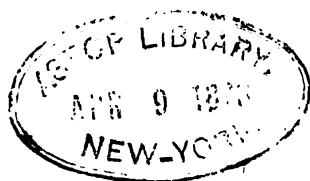
**VOL II.**

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**London:**

**PRINTED FOR THE AUTHORS;  
AND SOLD BY WILLIAMS AND SMITH, STATIONER'S-COURT; CONDER,  
BUCKLESBURY; BLACK, PARRY, AND KINGSBURY, LEADENHALL-  
STREET; BAYNES, PATERNOSTER-ROW; MAXWELL, SKINNER-  
STREET; AND OGLE, HOLBORN.**

**1809.**



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ELLING, PRINTER, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT.

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## ERRATA IN VOL. I.

Page 185, line 3,	for <i>of</i> , read <i>the</i> .
224,	3, for <i>swelling</i> , read <i>steady</i> .
233,	22, for <i>express</i> , read <i>repress</i> .
246,	7, for <i>vices</i> , read <i>views</i> .
263,	23, for <i>had</i> , read <i>have</i> .
313,	5, after <i>her</i> , add <i>head</i> .
324,	11, for <i>exceptions</i> , read <i>objections</i> .
350,	17, for <i>endowed</i> , read <i>ordained</i> .
379,	22, after <i>train</i> , add <i>them</i> .

## ERRATA IN VOL. II.

Page 29, line 16,	for <i>emotion</i> , read <i>unction</i> .
70,	17, for <i>Heverfordwest</i> , read <i>Haverfordwest</i> .
80,	15, before <i>system</i> , insert <i>the</i> .
86,	12, before <i>soon</i> , add <i>as</i> .
175,	4, for <i>balls</i> , read <i>cards</i> .
216,	10, before <i>times</i> , read <i>the</i> .
220,	3 from bottom, for <i>assert</i> , read <i>assent</i> .
224,	7, for <i>are</i> , read <i>is</i> .
232, last line	to be put at bottom of 233.
257,	5, for <i>shewing</i> , read <i>shunning</i> .
278,	23, for <i>them</i> , read <i>then</i> .
285,	1, for <i>Albington</i> , read <i>Abington</i> .
287,	2, for <i>offices</i> , read <i>offers</i> .
288,	25, for <i>Rassen</i> , read <i>Russen</i> .
297,	2, for <i>had</i> , read <i>hand</i> .
	4, for <i>Samuel</i> , read <i>Simon</i> .
	9, for <i>Hottershead</i> , read <i>Mottershead</i> .
	11, for <i>Billingsley</i> , read <i>Billingsly</i> .
317,	8, for <i>with</i> , read <i>which</i> .
353,	5 from bottom, for <i>failures</i> , read <i>failure</i> .
384,	9, <i>who were harassing them</i> .
386,	5 from bottom, <i>occupy a bench</i> .

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# HISTORY OF DISSENTERS.

## CHAP. V.

### SEMINARIES AMONG THE DISSENTERS DURING THIS PERIOD.

#### SECTION I.

##### ORIGIN OF SEMINARIES IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

**T**O the enlightened reader, ecclesiastical history will forcibly suggest the unspeakable importance of good ministers, in order to the support and advancement of the cause of Christ. Where they are wanting, every thing goes wrong ; where they abound, the honour of God, and the happiness of man are extensively secured.

In the formation of the character of a minister of Christ, two things are previously necessary, talents and piety, which in the language of the holy Scriptures are named gifts and graces. But these may be considered rather as radical powers, than an actual preparation for the office. Whatever talents a person may possess, we can view them in no higher light than a capacity of being qualified, not the qualification itself. As to the measure of talents requisite, they should not fall below mediocrity : the higher they rise above it, the greater benefit will accrue to the church of Christ. Piety is equally, or still more needful : what the Scriptures express by " being born again of the Spirit, believing in Christ, repenting of

sin, being sanctified wholly in spirit, in soul, and body, and living to the Lord," forms an essential part of the character of the man who aspires to the office of a Christian minister.

Where talents and piety are united, if the person "desires the office of a bishop," it is necessary for him to acquire those branches of knowledge by which he may be enabled to preach the Gospel. Of these an intimate acquaintance with the divine oracles must be the chief. By inspiration the apostles were fully taught the Christian doctrine in all its parts. But previously to this, all of them, with the exception of Saul of Tarsus, were upwards of three years the students of Jesus Christ, and received lectures of the purest theology from his lips. When their Master ascended into heaven, he sent down the Holy Spirit to lead them into all the truth. But with the lives of the apostles inspiration ceased, to exist no more among the sons of men: and the extraordinary gifts, which were liberally conferred on the first disciples for the more rapid propagation of the Gospel, continued no longer than the apostolic age. Whoever, therefore, would now lay claim to a divine inspiration, or to the extraordinary gifts which were possessed by the members of the primitive church, incurs from every sober mind the charge of the wildest enthusiasm; and demonstrates himself to be altogether unfit to feed the flock of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.

When by the preaching of the apostles and evangelists, and the ministers whom they ordained, the Gospel was planted among the nations, all the extraordinary aids for the propagation of it ceased; and every thing was left to the operation of ordinary means,

under the divine blessing, as the standing method appointed by the Head of the church for the advancement of his kingdom in every succeeding age. There is no way of attaining knowledge of any kind, but by the method common to all : and an acquaintance with religion, as well as with science, must be acquired by the vigorous application of the mind to the study of divine truth. A blessing from God on such endeavours is to be expected, and should be implored : but he is guilty of a most dangerous error, who conceives that it will in any degree supersede the necessity of ordinary means.

By reading, by hearing, by meditation, in short, by personal exertions in vigorous application to study without foreign aid, many valuable ministers have been formed, who, in a course of years, have attained to superior degrees of knowledge, and whose labours have been crowned with eminent success. But the question to be considered is, what method will be best adapted for general use in the instruction of those who are designed for the service of the sanctuary. It is not for men of genius, who now and then appear, and overleap the common bounds of the human intellect, but for understandings of ordinary size that the plan is proposed ; and for them a course of instruction, under proper masters, will approve itself to the most judicious minds.

A person may travel through a country without any previous knowledge of its cities and its roads ; but would he not have accomplished his purpose more effectually and more speedily, in company with one who was intimately acquainted with them, and had occasionally visited every part of it for thirty years. If a youth in going his first voyage to sea

should reject the assistance of an experienced mariner, would it not be to his injury? The world is now and then delighted with the sight of a self-taught philosopher, who by his own exertions rises to considerable attainments in science; but certainly this is not the road which we should recommend to those who wish to acquire the knowledge of philosophy: should we not rather say to a youth who consulted us, "go study under an able master: he is thoroughly acquainted with the subject, and will give you the information which you desire." Should not the ignorant have recourse to the man of knowledge? Should not the inexperienced apply for counsel to the wise? And should not youth seek instruction from age?

These remarks are applicable to the instruction of candidates for the Christian ministry. What more likely way can be conceived of attaining divine knowledge than by being placed under the tuition of such as have spent a long course of years in the study of the Scriptures with every necessary help; and who, in the discharge of the duties of the pastoral office, have seen the efficacy of its sacred truths on the souls of men. To unprejudiced minds they will suggest sufficient arguments for the institution of seminaries, as furnishing the most eligible method of education to candidates for the ministry.

A person may by his own endeavours gain a considerable portion of divine knowledge, but he will certainly gain it more easily, and more quickly, under the care of an able teacher, who communicates to him the benefit of all his own experience, who can recommend the best books on every subject, and the best method of study; and will prevent that waste of time and circuitous mode of proceeding, of which, if

left to himself, he would otherwise be in danger. This reasoning may appear to some to be intirely thrown away; but the prejudices of multitudes, and the opinions held on the subject, render the statement which has been given more necessary than they are aware.

The use of seminaries is not confined to the knowledge which they communicate; they are valuable also for the discipline which they exercise, and the dispositions which they infuse. The habits of diligent application to study, which the young men are under the necessity of acquiring, are beneficial to them during the whole of their future life. Their intercourse with other literary men is calculated to repress that overweening opinion of themselves which persons who know more than any of those around them are apt to entertain: and the frequent proofs of their ignorance of men and things, which they receive from the counsel and warnings of their tutor, and the remarks of their fellow-students, have a tendency to banish self-conceit, and to produce a spirit of docility and yielding to advice which is not very common among those who have never experienced a similar treatment.

While seminaries are supported by the voice of reason, pious minds may be desirous to know, if there be any thing which can be found to favour them in the word of God: nor will the inquiry be made without receiving satisfaction. There were schools of the prophets under the dispensation of the Old Testament, in which young men were trained up in the study of the Law of Moses, under the tuition of persons the most eminent, and the most favoured of God, Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha appear to have



presided in these seminaries of learning. Many, who have a hypothesis to support, would be greatly delighted if they could produce so respectable authority in its favour. May we not consider this ancient practice as sanctioning similar institutions under the Christian economy.

But there is more than analogy to argue from in support of seminaries : there is divine authority pronounced in an express injunction. In 2 Tim. ii. 2. the apostle Paul gives him the following charge : “ the things which thou hast heard of me before many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” Every thing necessary for Christian schools of education for the ministry, is to be found here. The system to be taught is the Gospel of Jesus Christ,—the things which Jesus Christ had revealed to Paul. The tutor, or professor, Timothy an evangelist, who had himself studied under the apostle Paul, and learned from him, both in public and in private, all those glorious truths which “ make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work ;” and who had acquired experience in the work of the ministry. The students are described,—they must be “ faithful men,” true believers in Christ, who display the efficacy of their faith by following the Lord fully ; and it probably means too, that they should be men of some eminence in gifts and graces. The term of their course of study is specified ; and it is to continue till they be so thoroughly instructed, that “ they shall be able to teach others\*.” The foundation is laid by the God

\* Against those educated in seminaries an objection has frequently been urged, that they are *man-made* ministers. But if they be *faithful* men, the objection falls to the ground ; for they

of nature, in endowing the student with good abilities and powerful talents ; and by the God of grace, in renewing the soul, and sanctifying these talents for the service of Christ. On this foundation a course of evangelical instruction, under an eminent and experienced servant of the Redeemer is reared : and the result is a fitness for the work of the ministry, for which it is intimated that this education will qualify the student of sacred truth. Such is the mode which the Holy Spirit prescribes as the ordinary way of preparing persons for the ministry of the word<sup>b</sup>. The interpretation of this passage, though first suggested from the reading of the Scriptures, will receive confirmation from the testimony of some of the most approved commentators, in different communions in the Christian church<sup>c</sup>.

were previously taught of God, and are sent by him. It is readily granted, that if students, though they may have been in seminaries, are not holy men, they are utterly unfit for the work of the ministry, and merit the reproachful epithet of man-made ministers. But let it be remembered, that persons destitute of divine grace, or of gifts for the pastoral office, may set up themselves for preachers : and when this is the case, we beg to know whether *self-made ministers* are one whit better than *man-made ministers* ?

<sup>b</sup> We say the *ordinary* way, for where circumstances are such that it cannot be obtained, ministers must do without it. The necessities of the church may render it proper that men should be ministers, who have not enjoyed the advantages of an academical, or even a liberal education. After the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the French protestants called to the pastoral office the most zealous of their members, and are indebted to those lay-preachers for the continuance of their existence.

<sup>c</sup> Sebastianus Schmidius, whom the Lutherans rank among the first of their expositors of the sacred Scripture, in his note on this passage, in his *Collegium Biblicum*, part II. p. 285, has these words : Fundantur hic scholæ et academix theologicæ, tum quoad doctores, tum quoad auditores, quos nos studiosos vocamus—intendit

When, from the sacred Scriptures, we launch into the sea of primitive antiquity, the silence of ecclesiastical writers, as to the education of persons for the ministry, is a subject of just astonishment. Men of

nimirum apostolus, ut Timotheus doctorem aliquem academicum, ut sic dicam, agat, idoneos ad ministerium viros solide in theologia informet, eo usque, ut alios informare et confirmare, adversariosque refutare queat."

The exposition of the verse by Mr. David Dickson, a strenuous Calvinist, and a very eminent minister of the kirk of Scotland, in the 17th century, runs thus. "That he teach not the people only sermonwise, but also scholastically instruct the candidates in divinity, or those that are designed for the ministerial function, by opening the apostolical doctrine, and betrusting it as it were with faithful depositaries, which may teach others the same doctrine, that so the doctrine of the Gospel may be delivered and propagated from hand to hand. He adduces an argument from his own example, who had instructed Timothy and many others, his fellow-disciples in this doctrine; not only teaching them publicly together with the people, but also instructing them scholastically apart from the people."

The same sentiments are delivered in the celebrated commentary of the late Dr. Macknight, a strenuous arminian, but of the same communion as Mr. Dickson. "What things thou hast heard from me concerning Christ, confirmed by many witnesses, who saw and conversed with them, those commit in trust to men of approved fidelity, who shall be fit also to teach them to others, that the knowledge of them may be continued in the world to the end."—"Though Christ promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against his church, means are to be used by his servants for securing it against the power of hell: and therefore St. Paul, by inspiration, ordered the ministers of the Gospel in every age, to instruct a number of capable men, in the true Gospel-doctrine, who were to preach that doctrine faithfully to others, who in like manner were to deliver it in purity to their successors."

An acute critic, and an eminent biblical scholar of the present day, the Rev. Greville Ewing, of Glasgow, conceives the doctrine specified above to be delivered in Ephes. iv. 11, 12, which he thus translates: "and he gave some indeed apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for (the sake

the first character for talents, investigation, and accuracy have supposed the mode of instruction just mentioned to have continued in the following ages : but the proof is too scanty to satisfy the mind which will not believe without evidence. Of the famous school of Alexandria under the direction of Pantænus, Origen, Cyril, and others, the praise has resounded through every part of the literary world. Theology, as well as the sciences, was taught there ; but it seems to have been for general use rather than any particular office, and for the benefit of persons designed for every department of secular life, rather than for the preparation of students for the work of the ministry. No doubt many pastors came forth from this school to the care of Christian flocks ; and similar institutions in other countries, though of inferior note, furnished their proportion.

Teachers of eloquence and philosophy abounded for several centuries after the Christian æra ; and we read often of their labours. But where theology was studied, is by no means so plain. The centuriators of Magdeburgh, though so copious on most topics, here have nothing to say. The indefatigable Tillemont in his voluminous account of the six first centuries affords little satisfaction on this subject. Bingham announces

of) fitting the saints for the work of the ministry, for (in order to) the building of the body of Christ. Till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God ; to a perfect man, even to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." " One of the most important ends which those supernaturally endowed office-bearers were to accomplish, for the edifying of the church, was to fit the saints for the work of the ministry ; that is, we apprehend, to train men, by ordinary means of instruction, for the office of a bishop." *Doctrine of Scripture respecting the Government of the Church of Christ*, p. 39, 41.

his intention to give an account of the seminaries : whether death or inability prevented him we know not, but he has not performed his promise. It is the opinion of the two former of these, as well as of the learned Spanhemius in his ecclesiastical history, that those who had the work of the ministry in view, were instructed by the more learned bishops in the different churches, and in some instances by men of note who had embraced the monastic life. From the reserve of historians during many centuries on this important subject, there is ground to fear, that the education of persons for the pastoral office was very much neglected ; and that to this neglect we are to attribute the increase of ignorance, and of superstition, which, from the days of the apostles gradually spread themselves over the Christian church. For though a few eminent men appeared in the third and fourth centuries, there is reason to fear that the mass of the clergy were but indifferently skilled in the knowledge of the sacred Scriptures. Without taking this into consideration it will be difficult to account for the rapid progress of superstitious stupidity which so extensively covered the whole of Christendom.

In the eighth century, we first meet with regulations for the instruction of the clergy. Charlemagne, one of those extraordinary men whom divine providence raises up to be a blessing to mankind, bemoaning the ignorance of the age, and eager for the diffusion of useful knowledge of every kind, while he instituted schools and colleges in different parts of his dominions, published a decree, that the youth designed for the priesthood should be taught in the cathedrals by the bishops and superior clergy, the principles of sacred

literature and the maxims of a holy life, that they might be qualified to become the salt of the earth<sup>d</sup>. That it was the practice before this time is not improbable; but the imperial decree made it a subject of closer attention, and more general observance.

The example of Charles was happily imitated not only by his successors, but by the rulers of other countries: and from century to century, universities arose in every European kingdom, and vied with each other for eminence of character and superiority of learning. The various branches of literature were cultivated with most assiduous labour, if not with corresponding success; and theology had its professors who taught it in that scholastic form which, though it has now fallen into disrepute, was then considered as the very acmé of perfection. But it still continued to be pursued in the abodes of the bishops, and was the usual appendage of a cathedral; and in some Romish countries this has been the practice nearly to the present time.

In the English universities sacred literature was cultivated along with human science: and we find Wickliffe employed in teaching theology to the students at Oxford. When the reformation really began under the auspices of Edward the sixth, that excellent young monarch sent for two learned foreigners, Bucer, and Peter Martyr; and placed them in the theological chairs of the two seats of learning, for the instruction of the English youth. The changes in Mary's reign were soon repaired by her successor, and from that time to the restoration, every branch of sacred literature was cultivated with a degree of assiduity and success, to which, if we judge from the character and abilities of the scholars and divines whom they sent

<sup>d</sup> Centuriat. Magdeburg.

forth, the history of the church can produce nothing superior in any country or in any age<sup>e</sup>.

Till this time, the number of those who could not, from scruples of conscience, avail themselves of the advantages to be derived from an education in the universities, was inconsiderable. But the act which produced two thousand non-conformists among the clergy, and some hundreds of thousands among the laity, created an unhappy change. The gates of the universities were shut against every theological student who could not declare his unfeigned assent and consent to the long list of articles which conformity prescribes; nay, even against every youth who, without having theology in his view, should aspire to the lowest degree of academical honours, unless he could subscribe the doubtful creed.

In Scotland the schools of literature have always been open to men of every church; and ingenuous youth, in quest of knowledge, have been invited to enter the temple of science, and of theology too, without having the question asked, "To what religious sect do you belong." Presbyterians of the kirk, seceders of various names, episcopalians, independents, baptists, and methodists there pursue their studies

<sup>e</sup> By some the universities are said to have declined, after the parliament's visitors displaced many of the professors and heads of colleges, on account of their attachment to the royal cause, and put new ones in their place. But if we may be allowed to judge of the qualifications of the teachers by the improvement of the scholars, the decision must be, that learning sustained no injury by the change. The greater part of those eminent men, who made so conspicuous a figure from the restoration down to the accession of the house of Hanover, were educated under them: and such a constellation of persons of genius, literature, and virtue no succeeding generation of masters in Oxford, and Cambridge has produced in the Anglican church.

without hostility, and without strife: and the honorary degrees are equally accessible to all. If there be any perceptible effect from the diversity of denominations, it is to produce an emulation for excellence in every breast, that each may confer honour on his own. Most of the foreign protestant colleges observe the same generous line of conduct.

But liberality in this respect has never been an attribute of the English universities: they are considered as the exclusive property of the dominant sect; and statutes still subsist in full force, which were perhaps enacted in the days of the crusades, or at least accord with the sentiments of the men of that time, infinitely more than such as should prevail in the nineteenth century. When will England, with that frank generosity which becomes her dignified character, throw open the gates of learning to all her sons without exception; and invite to her universities, the British youth of every denomination, that society may be strengthened and adorned with a still greater number of intelligent and well-instructed men in every department of business, and station of life. Few things would more effectually conduce to wear away prejudice, to mitigate the violence of party spirit, and to produce forbearance, harmony, and union, than the free intercourse among the youth in the acquisition of that literature which is equally necessary for them all, and which, of course, from the similarity of their pursuits, would form them to a greater similarity of general principles, and general character. From that amiable spirit of philanthropy, and moral patriotism, which is widely diffused both among public characters, and men of the first respectability in private life; much is to be hoped for; and it is no presumption to expect that when the subject



has for some time been before the public and fully investigated, and its benefits displayed, the discussion will issue in conceding the desirable privilege in its full extent.

But to return to less happy days than those in which we live, the exclusion of that portion of the youth who held the principles of non-conformity, from the power of being educated in the universities, placed them in circumstances entirely novel, and constrained them to adopt new modes of instruction, and with their feeble means to erect a second temple, which though exceedingly inferior in external splendor to the first, might yet answer the important purpose, and supply a race of ministers qualified to officiate with acceptance in the sanctuary of the Lord.

In the English seats of learning, contrary to the practice of most of the other universities in Europe, the chief part of the business is performed, not by the professors of the different departments of science, but by private tutors. Of these, many ranked among the non-conformists ; and as tutors, were needed for training up a rising race of pastors for the new formed churches, they were as well qualified for the task as ever, and they could communicate their instructions in other places as well as at Oxford and Cambridge. Such were the first teachers of theology among the dissenters, and by them was formed the second generation of their ministers. Such was the origin of our system of clerical education. Our dissenting academies arose out of the universities, persons educated in the universities afterwards taught, to a company of non-conforming youths, what they had there learnt, and what some of them had there taught.

## SECTION II.

ACCOUNT OF THE DIFFERENT SEMINARIES AND  
TUTORS AMONG THE DISSENTERS.

**A** PARTICULAR account of these seminaries would furnish both instruction and pleasure to the friends of the dissent; but the limits, which the extent of our work constrains us to prescribe to ourselves, allow only a rapid glance and a brief notice of the respectable tutors, and the most remarkable circumstances of their lives and labours.

At the head of the list, both as to the earliness of commencement, and the number of scholars, Richard Frankland, A. M. may with propriety be placed. He studied at Cambridge with considerable credit as to his proficiency in learning; and he there acquired what is infinitely more valuable, that faith which purifieth the heart, and worketh by love. After preaching in different places in the north, he was settled at Bishop's Auckland, in the county of Durham. While he was labouring diligently and acceptably in this place, he was called to another office of importance by Oliver Cromwell, who then swayed the sceptre of authority over England. When a new man rises to sovereign sway, if he be a man of talents, which is usually the case, feeling none of the hereditary sentiments of those whose descent is from a long line of monarchs, he has no respect for ancient usages on account of their antiquity, and is not deterred from adopting plans which are new, merely from

the want of precedent to give them authority, provided they appear beneficial to the community. Such was the spirit of the protector under whom neither religion nor morals declined, and who sought to encourage learning too. Oxford and Cambridge had long enjoyed the unrivalled honour of being the seats of learning; but Oliver perceiving the inconvenience of the students being obliged to go so far for education; and knowing from his own experience that many a promising youth has no money to spare for travelling some hundred miles, he determined to bring learning to their doors, and fixed on Durham as a third university for the benefit of the northern parts of England. When we consider Cromwell's peculiar talent in appointing to offices of every kind, men who were eminently qualified to fill them with propriety, it is not a little to the honour of Mr. Frankland that he was chosen vice-president of the infant college. When the protector died, the Durham college lost its patron, and at the restoration every thing returned into its ancient channel. All the friends of literature must view its abolition with regret. When learning comes to the door, multitudes will receive her not only with readiness, but with gratitude, who are unable to travel hundreds of miles to pay her court. There is abundant room in England for four universities; and had Durham and Exeter been associated with Oxford and Cambridge, from the days of Oliver Cromwell to the present time, learning, and, it is to be hoped, virtue and religion too, would have been far more widely extended through the country.

The restoration of Charles, was to Mr. Frankland the beginning of sorrows; and after enduring the malice of the adversaries of every thing which is good,

the act of uniformity obliged him to retire from the scene of his parochial labours, without the pale of the established church. Cosins, bishop of Durham, earnestly urged him to conform. Indeed Mr. Frankland was so respectable a man, that every good prelate must be very desirous to have such clergy in his diocese. But his conscience would not permit him to comply. Re-ordination by the hands of a diocesan bishop he could not submit to, as he was conscious of the validity of the orders which he had before received from the pastors of the neighbouring churches, and that he was already as much a minister as all the bishops on earth could make him.

Being silenced by that horrible decree, written in the blood of millions of immortal souls, which forbade two thousand conscientious men of God to speak to sinners that they might be saved, he retired to a private estate which he had at Rathmel, in Yorkshire. But unwilling to spend life in idleness, and hide his talents in a napkin, and acting upon the wise and benevolent maxim, that "when we cannot do what we would, we should do what we can," by the advice of his friends, he set up a private academy in his own house. Some of the neighbouring gentry intrusted him with the instruction of their sons, instead of sending them to the universities; and he educated a considerable number of young persons for the work of the ministry. He continued in this office from the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-five till the day of his death. By the iniquity of the times, he was obliged frequently to change the place of his abode. In the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-four he removed to Natland, near Kendal, in

Westmoreland; from thence, by reason of the five-mile act, to Dawsonfield, in the same county; from thence to Halburrow, in Lancashire; from thence to Calton, in Craven, in Yorkshire; then to Attercliff, near Sheffield; and last of all, back again to Rathmel. The good man's life was a pilgrimage indeed in external changes as well as in the inward temper of his mind: and the students, as well as the tutor, were disciples of the cross. In all these places he diligently exercised the pastoral office, was highly esteemed in love for his work's sake, and his labours were crowned with remarkable success.

In the latter part of his life he met with much vexation from the ecclesiastical courts. Scarcely a year elapsed from one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight till his death, in which he did not suffer trouble for keeping an academy and training up young men for the dissenting ministry. Surely the statute-book of a country needs a revision, when to instruct pious youths to preach Christ's gospel is a crime to be punished by the laws. He was once excommunicated for non-appearance: and this dreadful sentence, which retains all the savageness of the darkest ages of popery, and dishonours and pollutes not the page only but the volume in which it is contained, would have been put in execution but for the interposition of friends with good king William, who, as head of the church of England, ordered Mr. Frankland's absolution to be read in the parish church. But his troubles from wicked and unreasonable men did not end, till death, the messenger of rest and peace to the servants of Christ, set him free from these enemies, as well as from the stone and stranguary, and various other infirmities, which

he had borne with exemplary patience. He departed this life in October, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-eight, aged sixty-eight years.

“ He was (says Dr. Calamy) an eminent divine, and an acute metaphysician, a solid interpreter of Scripture, very sagacious in discovering errors, and able in defending truth. He was a person of great humility and affability: not a very popular, but a substantial preacher. Few conversed with him but respected and valued him. He was a man of great moderation, very liberal to the poor, studious to promote the Gospel in all places, and good in all relations in life.”

In the list of his students now before us, who amount to upwards of three hundred, are the names of many who were a blessing to the dissenting churches in the following age, and whose memory will be held in veneration by all who rank among the friends of sacred literature, unfeigned piety, and fervent zeal.

Mr. Frankland was succeeded by the reverend Timothy Jollie, whose father, Thomas Jollie, was ejected from the living of Althome, in Lancashire, a man of the first order for gifts and graces, who, after his non-conformity, for preaching suffered more abundant vexations and persecutions than most of his brethren; but lived afterwards to see days of peace, and died in the year one thousand seven hundred and three at an advanced age. To the friends of Christ it gives peculiar pleasure to perceive a son who inherits the virtues and excellencies of such a father. That pleasure they received in Mr.

<sup>†</sup> Nonconformist's Memorial, vol. II. p. 180.

**Timothy Jollie.** He studied under Mr. Frankland, and was ordained pastor of a church at Sheffield in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-one. The following year he was honoured with the lot of a confessor; his goods were spoiled, and he endured a rigorous confinement in the prison of York, in consequence of the five-mile act. Much heavenly wisdom did the good men of these days learn from the things which they suffered; their minds were sobered by their confinement, and the world appeared to them in its true colours as an object to be crucified, and not to be loved.

On the death of Mr. Frankland, Mr. Jollie entered on the arduous office of tutor; and the academy was removed to Attercliff, a village in the vicinity of Sheffield. There he dwelt during the remainder of his days, and continued to discharge the duties both of the pastoral office and academical instruction with great assiduity and acceptance, till the year one thousand seven hundred and fourteen, when he was called away from his earthly labours in the fifty-fourth year of his age.

Timothy Jollie was a very superior man both for learning and for goodness. His person struck the spectator with the pleasing union of dignity and sweetness: his voice was music, and his elocution fascinating to the audience. His natural talents were extraordinary; and his acquirements in theology and the branches of knowledge connected with it, such as might be expected from a course of ardent and persevering study. He shone also as a tutor in the communication of knowledge, and in the government of his scholars. An elevated spirit of devotion crowned the whole, and gave energy and unction to

all his services, both in the pulpit and in the lecture room. Dr. Grosvenor, who was brought up at his academy, speaks with gratitude and delight of his tutor's zeal in endeavouring to kindle the same sacred flame in the breasts of the youth, and of the benefit which he received from his pious and affectionate counsels. Indeed without this spirit of pure devotion, how vain is every acquisition of divine and human knowledge as to the great purposes of the Christian ministry.

His labours in the academy must have been great, for in the year one thousand seven hundred the number of students amounted to twenty-six. Under what obligations does the world lye to such a man! What a mass of heavenly light is he the means of diffusing far and wide over the souls of men! His death at so early a period was a severe loss to the cause of the dissenters, and indeed to the church of Christ. He left a son in the ministry, who first assisted, and then succeeded Mr. Matthew Clark in London.

Taunton, in Somersetshire, was the seat of another academy, instituted nearly about the same time with the former, under the superintendence of the Rev. Matthew Warren. He was educated at Oxford, and afterwards settled at Downhead in this county. Being ejected by the act of uniformity, he was, by the importunity of friends, to whose judgment he paid a deference, prevailed on to undertake the arduous office of instructing young men for the work of the ministry. His qualifications are highly extolled by his contemporaries. To a sufficient portion of learning he united those qualities, which are neces-



sary to give learning its due influence and use. The talent of conveying knowledge to the weakest capacity he possessed in an eminent degree. To the various tastes and dispositions of his students, he accommodated himself so as most effectually to facilitate their progress in science. From that disposition of mind, which would compel every student to think in every thing like his tutor, he was far removed. But while he wished them to form their own judgment, so that their system might be the result of conviction, he was careful to guard them against those errors which undermine the foundations of religion. Along with unfeigned piety there dwelt in his soul humility, modesty, and a sweet and cheerful temper, which strongly engaged the affections of the students to the tutor.

In the stormy reign of Charles the second, he had to contend with all the vexation, and all the dangers of imprisonment and fines, which then threatened true goodness and conscientious integrity, if they were found without the pale of the church of England. To academical pursuits the fears of confinement in a jail, and the concealment necessary to prevent it, were very unfavourable ; but the mind, when duly exerted, can wonderfully accommodate itself to circumstances : and the superior energy which it acquires in such seasons, enables it to snatch opportunities which others would overlook, and improve by events as well as books.

When James's enthusiasm for popery, was overruled by the gracious Head of the church to give the wearied dissenters a reprieve from persecution, the people assembled openly for public worship. A large congregation at Taunton invited Mr. Warren to un-

dertake the pastoral charge in that place, in conjunction with the Rev. Emmanuel Hartford, a fellow-sufferer for non-conformity. This double office brought with it a great addition of duties ; but minds vigorous and well directed, and under the influence of divine principles, are prompted to more strenuous application, and a more eager improvement of every inch of time : by this means double work is done, and a habit of mental as well as bodily alertness is continually preserved. He proved himself an able and faithful pastor. His sermons were perspicuous and weighty, and were delivered with affection. It was his endeavour to make them intelligible to the weakest of his hearers, ever preferring the benefit of others to his own fame. He was a man of peace and moderation, and peace reigned among his flock. His own latter end was also peace. On the approach of death, his answer to a friend, who inquired after his welfare, was : " I am just going into eternity : but I bless God I am neither ashamed to live, nor afraid to die." He died the fourteenth of June, one thousand seven hundred and six, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. He had sent out a considerable number of young men, many of whom were useful in the ministry ; many appeared with honour in private stations ; and the academy was very full at the time of his decease.

His successor in the theological chair was the Rev. Stephen James, who had been educated under him, and was afterwards his assistant in those branches of knowledge, which are considered as subsidiary to theological pursuits. He was minister of a congregation at Fulwood, in the vicinity of Taunton. Philosophy and mathematics were taught by the Rev.

Robert Darch: and the celebrated Mr. Grove had pneumatology and ethics assigned him as his province<sup>†</sup>. These appointments were sanctioned by the unanimous vote of a considerable number of ministers, who assembled for the purpose. As the labours of these tutors were continued into the next period of our history, a more particular account of them will then be given. Nothing more remains to be noticed now, but that it is said, that when the schism bill passed, the operations of this institution were suspended for a season. If they have been called goths who could shut up schools for teaching useful human knowledge, what name shall be given to those, who with senatorial deliberation could break up institutions framed for the dissemination of divine truth, to save immortal souls?

At Shrewsbury, likewise, there was a seminary for the education of dissenting ministers. The non-conformists in that town were happy in the possession of Francis Tallents and John Bryan, who had formerly officiated in the parish churches, but afterwards preached to those who, like themselves, felt it their duty to separate from the established church. Mr. Tallents was a man of superior learning, educated at Cambridge, fellow, and afterwards vice-president, of Magdalen college; a tutor of celebrity, and therefore well qualified to assist in academical instruction. To young men who were prosecuting their theological studies, he cheerfully communicated help. But the academy there appears to have been brought into full effect and form under one of his colleagues in office.

This person was James Owen; and the name of Owen, raised to imperial dignity in the theological

<sup>†</sup> Grove's Life, p. 22.

world by Dr. John Owen, he did not disgrace. South Wales was his native country: his friends were all of high-church principles; and they had preferment to bestow, if he would have continued in the bosom of the establishment; but he followed the dictates of his conscience, and became a dissenter. He studied under Mr. Samuel Jones, of Brynllwarch, in Glamorganshire, and during the heat of persecution entered as a labourer into the vineyard of his Lord. Spoiling of goods, imprisonments, with the addition of cruel mockings, were Mr. Owen's lot; and being sanctified from above, gave augmented energy to his soul, and firmness and intrepidity to his character, and placed the world to him in that point of view in which it should always be seen. From a prison he writes thus to a friend; "if the Gospel be not worth suffering for, it is not worth preaching. It is indeed an honour, after we have preached the truth, to be called forth to suffer for it."

He was first pastor of a small congregation at Swiney, near Oswestry, and at the same time chaplain to a family there. For convenience, in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-nine, the place of worship was removed into the town. After labouring in Oswestry twenty years, he removed to Shrewsbury, on the death of Mr. Bryan. While he there discharged the duties of the pastoral office with fidelity and acceptance, he appeared with high respectability at the head of a theological seminary. It had been formed soon after his settlement at Oswestry, and gradually increased. He was well qualified for the work: his natural abilities were great, his learning considerable, his application above measure. Sixteen hours a day did he study from year to year. As a divine, a linguist, a man of science, and an adept in

history, both ecclesiastical and civil, he was far above the ordinary standard. His manner of conducting the academy gives a high idea of his capacity, his assiduity, and the unwearied attention to the improvement of his pupils.

There was a peculiarity in one part of his academical practice which merits observation. In the theological disputes among the students, which were every where common in those days, he would not allow the opponent to the truth to stand forth in his own person, and to bring the arguments and objections as his own, but desired him to mention them as the arguments of the sect by name. The mind, he judged, should be preserved pure from error as from vice. Truth should be so sacred, that it ought never to be contradicted and opposed as if it were error; nor should the garb of error be put on in order to deceive, as if it were the clothing of truth. By appearing as the champion for error, a youth has sometimes become enamoured of arguments of his own invention; and from trying what he could say in its favour, has insensibly slid into an adoption of the system. At any rate, such a practice pollutes the soul, it destroys those acute sensibilities for truth which ought to be cherished in every student of divine knowledge; and has a tendency to produce what ought to be viewed by every good man with horror, an insensibility and indifference to truth and error. As profitable and more innocent ways of improving the mental powers in the ingenuity of invention, and skill in arguing might certainly be found: or if they could not, a pure unsullied mind is infinitely more valuable than all the advantages which this method could possibly confer<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> Dr. Johnson, that accurate critic in the science of human nature, in one of his periodical papers, introduces a person who had

The continuance of such an able tutor as Mr. Owen to a good old age, would have been a valuable blessing to the church of Christ; for he was a superior man both in gifts and graces, and eminently qualified for the office of a tutor; but the ways of God are not as ours. The stone, the instrument of death to the divines of that century, put an end to his valuable life in the year one thousand seven hundred and six, when he was only fifty-two years of age. Amidst the tortures inflicted by this disease, he displayed the faith, the patience, the hope, and the joy of a disciple of Christ. In the most affectionate manner he recommended to his students a life of devotedness to God, and to the souls of men: "I would not," said he, "for ten thousand worlds but have lived as I did. Now I have the blessed comforts of it: and would not, for a world, be without these divine joys which refresh my soul<sup>1</sup>."

Samuel Benion, M. D. took his place both in the academy and in the church; a successor not unworthy of Mr. Owen. He was a native of Shropshire, received a classical education under Mr. Ogden, a celebrated school-master at Wirksworth, and afterwards spent some time with Mr. Philip Henry, at Broad Oak, both as a teacher, and a learner: a teacher of some young gentlemen who boarded in the house, and a learner been all his life a disputant; and who, for the sake of dispute, as often adopted the wrong side of the question as the right, bitterly lamenting that he had lost all relish for what is true and good, and that error and evil had unhappily become as eligible to him as truth and goodness. Whether it was a real case, we know not, but the writer discovered a just knowledge of the heart, and delineated a character which such a practice was calculated to form.

<sup>1</sup> Life of James Owen.

from Mr. Henry, who instructed him in academical knowledge, and directed his theological studies. In one thousand six hundred and ninety-five, he went to the college of Glasgow, and spent a year there with such a rigorous economy of time, that he scarcely allowed himself sufficient leisure for food and sleep. His love for learning, and his amiable deportment gained him the esteem and friendship of the professors in a very high degree<sup>k</sup>.

The death of Mr. Philip Henry, whose praise is in all the churches, took place a few days after Mr. Benion's return to his friends; and the destitute congregation at Broad Oak immediately cast their eyes on him as a successor to their venerable pastor. But it was not without great difficulty that he could be prevailed on to comply with their wishes. The thoughts of standing in Philip Henry's place overpowered him with dread; he consented, however, to continue with them as a preacher, and some years afterwards was ordained their pastor.

His superior talents, his rapid improvement, and his studious turn of mind being observed by his friends, he was solicited to instruct young men for the ministry. He undertook the task, and at the same time improved the advantages of his retired situation to acquire those branches of knowledge which would render

<sup>k</sup> He visited that country again in the year one thousand seven hundred and three, and took his degree of doctor of medicine. The account which he gives of its moral state will be no less surprising to the natives of Scotland now, than to those who live south of the Tweed. "All the while he was at Glasgow, though he lay in a public inn, he never saw any drunk, nor heard one swear. And in all the inns on the road in Scotland, where he lay, though some of them were mean, they had family worship daily performed morning and evening." Matthew Henry's Works. p. 596.

him more accomplished as a tutor. After ten years labours at Broad Oak, in the year one thousand seven hundred and six, he removed to Shrewsbury, and united his academy to that which was left by Mr. Owen. He was now in a larger sphere of labour and usefulness both as a tutor and a minister.

To learning, which is calculated to gain the esteem of students, he united an affectionate concern for their welfare, which wins the heart : and he was greatly beloved. Elocution he possessed in an eminent degree. He had a fluency of expression which was never at a loss for words, and a quickness of invention which readily supplied ideas at the moment, in such order and propriety. that his extemporaneous addresses had all the appearance of elaborate study ; and his elevated piety added a sweet emotion, which gave an inexpressible charm to the whole. By the union of these excellencies, he was as a pastor highly acceptable to his flock, and as a tutor an exalted pattern to his students. Few endowments are more valuable to a preacher : and when the mind, like Dr. Benion's, is filled with so precious a measure of sacred truth, the person who possesses them is qualified for rendering more than ordinary service to the cause of Christ. He so much admired the discipline of the college of Glasgow, that as far as circumstances would permit, he modelled his academy to a similar form. While all beheld him with pleasure, and looked forward to many future years in which he would shine as a light in the world, the great Head of the church had determined otherwise. A fever stole insensibly upon him, till his violence overcame his mental powers, and put an end to his valuable life on the fourth of March, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight, in the



the thirty fifth year of his age<sup>1</sup>. He had at that time thirty students under his tuition, with the prospect of an increase.

In little more than a month afterwards, Shrewsbury sustained the loss of his aged colleague Mr. Tallents, whose counsel, if not personal assistance in the academy, must have proved a considerable benefit both to Dr. Benion and his scholars. He was a man of a catholic spirit, and considered himself as born only to advance the cause of pure and undefiled religion. When the new meeting-house was built, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one, he caused it to be written on the walls, that it was erected "not for a faction or a party, but for promoting repentance and faith in communion with all that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Some days before his death, he blessed God for his mercy and love, declared his reliance on Christ alone, and exclaimed, "I am more full of comfort and joy than I am able to express." Providence, which measures the days of man in a way so mysterious, had lengthened out his life to the age of eighty nine years. He died the eleventh of April, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight. The following character was given of him by Mr. Henry: "he was very much a gentleman, a scholar, and a Christian, a great admirer of Christ and free grace, and a man of eminent prudence, and heavenly-mindedness." Mr. Dawes, the clergyman who had read the service over many an evil doer in Salop, when he officiated at the funeral of Mr. Tallents, would not repeat the words "*in sure and certain hope*:" his conscience would allow him to say only—*in hope*<sup>m</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Henry's Works, 594, &c.

<sup>m</sup> Henry's Works, 613—20. Calamy's Continuation, p. 722.

John Reynolds, who succeeded Dr. Benion, lived into the second period of our history, and his life will be recorded there.

The metropolis had also literary institutions for the benefit of dissenting youth.

John Spademan, who was engaged in the service of an academy in Hoxton-square, is entitled to an honourable place among the tutors of this period. His father, the Rev. Thomas Spademan, was ejected from the living of Authorpe, in Lincolnshire, and was afterwards pastor of a congregation at Boston, in the same county. The son was educated at Magdalen college, in Cambridge; and was afterwards presented to the living of Swayton in his native shire, and officiated there several years after the act of uniformity. But becoming dissatisfied with the terms of communion, and unable to perform the clerical duties with a good conscience, he resigned the benefice, and took his lot among the dissenters.

In the discouraging state of public affairs at that time, Holland, which greatly to its honour had been long a sanctuary for the persecuted and oppressed, presented to him not only a peaceful abode, but an extensive and agreeable field of labour. He was chosen pastor of the English presbyterian church at Rotterdam, and performed the duties of the office much to the satisfaction and benefit of his flock. While he taught, he did not cease to learn, and entered on a course of studies on the subjects belonging to the character and pursuits of a divine, with such assiduity and perseverance, as to collect in his capacious mind an ample treasure of the most valuable knowledge. The person who acts in this manner, and endeavours to make himself master

of every thing belonging to his profession, qualifies himself for more extensive usefulness. Though, at the time, the importance of so great a measure of knowledge does not appear, he may be called into a station for which he is by that means peculiarly fitted, and in which it is absolutely necessary.

Some time after the revolution, Mr. Spademan returned to England, and was chosen co-pastor with the great Mr. Howe; to be connected with whom, and to be thought worthy to fill the same pulpit, was an honour of which a man may be tempted to boast. At the close of the century, Dr. Joshua Oldfield, who had been a tutor in the country, was called to London, and wishing to continue in the same sphere of action, Mr. Spademan, and Mr. Lorimer united with him, and established in Hoxton-square, an academy celebrated for the advantages enjoyed by the students for the acquisition of literature both human and divine. Mr. Spademan appears to have taught the oriental languages with the critical application of them in the study of the sacred Scriptures. While many years of usefulness might yet have been expected, it pleased the great Disposer of events to afflict him with a disease which gradually wasted his mortal frame; and he finished his course with the spirit of a Christian, on the fourth of September, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight.

Mr. Spademan's qualifications as a tutor, were of the first rate. He was well skilled in philosophy and history; thoroughly versed in controversial theology; and for an accurate knowledge of the learned languages, especially the originals of the sacred scriptures, he had few equals. He had read with attention the works of the most eminent critics, and was himself a

critic of no mean note. The qualities of the heart bore a full proportion to those of his understanding. His devotedness to God was evident by the whole tenor of his life: his soul was raised above the world and crucified to it. Benevolence to the poor he carried almost to an excess. His moderation as to other denominations of Christians was exemplary. He was especially noted for sincerity and uprightness of spirit and conduct, both towards God and man. There is a subtle policy with which some ingenious clerks carry on their projects of advancement to affluence and dignities, to which he was an entire stranger. And there is a sectarian craft by which men, in an underhand way with wily arts, contrive to bring people over to their party, and afterwards to preserve their attachment, into whose secret the soul of John Spademan never entered. While it is impossible not to abhor what bears so strong a resemblance to that old serpent the devil, all must admire the divine simplicity of this venerable man. He was very communicative to younger ministers, and ready to assist them with his advice. On the evening before his death, he gave to one who applied to him, the following counsels: "First, Charge it upon yourself every day, to make a solemn resignation of yourself and your affairs into the hands of God, and lean not to your own understanding. Secondly, As to your public and preaching work, though the doctrines and duties relating to the rule of Christ's kingdom are by no means to be neglected, yet, above all things, endeavour to bring your hearers to a new heart and a new spirit, without which all will signify nothing; and for want of which, I have seen many who made a fair appearance in religion, come in a little time to

make light of Christ, the sum and substance of our religion".

The esteem, in which he was held by his brethren, may be judged of by this circumstance; that when the dissenting ministers went up with an address of congratulation to queen Anne in the year one thousand seven hundred and six, for the success of her armes, Mr. Spademan was appointed to present it.

He was succeeded in the academy by Mr. Capel, who had been professor of Hebrew in the university of Saumur, before the revocation of the edict of Nantes. But the remainder of the history of this institution we defer till the second period.

There is one seminary more in London, which had a succession of tutors during this period, and is remarkable for being the only one which has continued from the first period of our history to the present day. It was instituted by the independents, and supported by a fund which they raised in their congregations. One of the first tutors was Isaac Chauncy, A. M. and M. D. He was the eldest son of the Rev. Charles Chauncy, minister of Ware, in Hertfordshire, an old puritan, who sought a sanctuary from persecution, in New England, where he was afterwards appointed president of Harvard college. The freedom enjoyed at home during the commonwealth, by those who were not of the episcopal persuasion, brought back from America, some of those who had emigrated, and the sons of others. Isaac Chauncy was one of these, and he obtained the rectory of Woodborough, in Wiltshire. Being ejected by the Bartholomew act, he removed to Andover, where he was for some time, pastor of a congregational church.

<sup>a</sup> Funeral Sermon by Mr. Rosewell.

Soon after the recalling of king Charles's indulgence he left the country, and came to London with a view to practise medicine, which was a hereditary science in the family. But after the death of Mr. Clarkson, he was, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-seven, chosen to the pastoral office as his successor, and ministered there fourteen years. The congregation declined under him. To come into the pulpit after Caryl, Owen, and Clarkson, was an arduous task, and beyond his strength. Though a learned divine, he was not a popular preacher; and to add to the evil, being a stiff, or some would say, a furious independent, he tormented his people from the pulpit with frequent dissertations on church government. When he should have been calling sinners to repent, and to flee to the Saviour for mercy, he was entertaining them with the order and discipline of a congregational church: and when he ought to have been edifying believers by illustrating the doctrines and promises of the word of God, he was instructing them in every punctilio of the independent modes and forms. Such topics, however proper in their place, do not satisfy the appetite of an hungry soul; and to the credit of his flock it must be spoken, the greater part of them went away to societies where they could hear of Jesus Christ and his great salvation.

When ministers, in their preaching, become fond of nick nacks\*, and put any other thing, whether science, peculiar opinions on important points, or distinguishing forms of church government, in the room of the grand principles of the Gospel, the tendency and effect among dissenters, and indeed in all voluntary

\* It is difficult to invent a more appropriate term than this, which we find in the works of a venerable Welch divine, Walter Cradock.

societies, is to scatter the congregation. Except a few partisans who enter into the notions of the preacher, the rest feel no interest, grow weary, and go somewhere else, or nowhere at all. Dr. Chauncy, finding himself forsaken, and that the pews were growing as numerous as the hearers, determined to quit the ministry, and could not be prevailed on by any intreaties to continue in the pastoral office. Nor is it matter of regret, when we consider that it was to give place to Dr. Watts. Were all those, who instead of preaching Christ and him crucified, amuse themselves and their audience with other topics, of whatever kind they may be, to imitate his example, and quit a station which they shew themselves unqualified to hold, there would be joy in heaven, and certainly no cause for mourning on earth. How many flourishing and numerous congregations have such men ruined!

However unsuccessful Dr. Chauncy was as a preacher, his brethren considered him qualified to be a tutor, and appointed him to that office. The praise of learning he certainly deserved; and if his judgment and moderation bore any proportion to his mental attainments, he might be useful in that station; and though he himself was not a model, he might give good instructions to his scholars. A whetstone may sharpen a sword, though it is itself of a composition both different and inferior, and give it an edge, so that it shall pierce to the inmost marrow. The doctor's academical labours continued to the year one thousand seven hundred and twelve, which was the year of his death. His successor, Dr. Ridgley, will demand our notice in the second period of the work.

Besides these seminaries, of whose first tutors an

account has just been given, which continued their existence into the second period of the history, there is a second class, which had their origin in this period, but the first tutors lived into the next. These shall just be mentioned, and a particular account of them reserved to the succeeding period of our work.

The city of Exeter, famous at this time for the number and zeal of its dissenting inhabitants, had a seminary within its walls, under the tuition of Joseph Hallett, one of their ministers.

John Moore, of Bridgwater, and a gentleman nearly of the same name, John Moor, at Tiverton, were both dissenting ministers, whose academies began at this time, but continued beyond the limits of the first period.

Mr. John Short, the son of Ames Short a non-conformist minister, kept an academy at Colyton, in Devon, till the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-eight, when he was called to succeed the Rev. Matthew Barker, in London. His place as a tutor, as well as a minister, was filled by Mr. Matthew Towgood, who survived long after the conclusion of this period.

An academy of the highest character was kept first at Gloucester and afterwards at Tewkesbury, by the Rev. Samuel Jones, but his useful life was happily continued beyond the limits of the present time.

The Rev. Joseph Porter, who taught academical learning at Alcester, in Warwickshire, outlived the house of Stewart.

The Rev. Julius Saunders, of Bedworth, in the same county, began at this time, but is to be numbered too among the dissenting tutors of the next period.



There is a third class of seminaries, the whole of whose existence was within the limits of this division of our work, but which had several tutors to conduct their business. Manchester, Coventry, and London, furnish instances of this kind.

Henry Newcome, M. A. educated at St. John's college, Cambridge, first rector of Gourworth, in Cheshire, and afterwards called to Manchester, is to be ranked among the dissenting tutors of this period. He was ejected from his living in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two, but continued among his people, and officiated to them in private. As soon as the times permitted, they erected a large meeting-house, and he exercised the pastoral office among them to the day of his death.

By the friends of religion he was considered as the glory of Lancashire. His talents for preaching were of the first class. He possessed an indescribable charm by which he insinuated himself into the souls of his hearers, and fixed their attention so closely, and with so much delight, that they were sorry when he ~~was~~ done. This talent, so precious in itself, was rendered still more valuable by an extraordinary application to study, which began early in life, and continued to its close. Some persons entrusted with this gift of impressive eloquence, have considered it as rendering study needless, and more than supplying its place. Their hearers are charmed, but that is all: they are not edified. Henry Newcome took the way to edify his congregation as well as to delight them. Whatever faculty of eloquence in speaking any one may have received from the God of nature, let him ever remember that the continued edification of an audience of persons of intellect and judgment

is not to be attained without a persevering course of laborious study.

The ardour of devotion which glowed in his soul, and burst forth in flames of zeal, gave his discourses all the efficacy which any thing human could confer; but his dependence for success was on the influences of the Holy Ghost. How well qualified such a man was to be a tutor need not be said, when it is considered that he was likewise eminent for amiableness of disposition, for candour, for humility, and moderation. After living to the age of sixty-eight, useful and highly respected by persons of every denomination and rank, he finished his earthly course in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-five<sup>p</sup>.

His successor was John Chorlton who, after going through a course of academical studies under Mr. Frankland, was called to his native place to assist Mr. Newcome in his labours. Numerous are the advantages which such a situation furnishes to a young man who knows how to improve them aright. He who prefers a whole charge of his own, and wishes to be fully master without the controul of age, or the restraints of experience, shews that he is not deficient in self-confidence, but by the wise, he will not be praised for his judgment. Mr. Chorlton survived his venerable predecessor only ten years, and was called away from his labours in the year one thousand seven hundred and five, in the fortieth year

<sup>p</sup> The late archbishop of Armagh was, it is said, descended from him. Had that respectable prelate possessed the religious sentiments, and the ardent zeal of his progenitor, he would have been more instructive as a theological writer, and a thousand times more useful to Ireland as its primate.

of his age. Matthew Henry, who names him his beloved friend and correspondent for sixteen years, delineates his character in the following words: "He was eminent for solid judgment, great thought, an extraordinary quickness and readiness of expression; a casuist one of a thousand; a wonderfully clear head, and one that did *dominari in concionibus*; of great sincerity and serious piety, and who has been very useful in educating youth." How well qualified he was for the office of a tutor, Mr. Henry's account of him abundantly proves: and with the assistance which Mr. Newcome rendered both to master and scholars, the advantages in this seminary must have been considerable.

In the five last years of his life, Mr. Chorlton was assisted by James Coningham, M. A. who received his education in the university of Edinburgh. He was first settled at Penrith, in Cumberland. His ministerial labours were crowned with success; and he there entered on the office of a tutor. Being called to Manchester in the year one thousand seven hundred, he took part of his colleague's labours, both in the pulpit and in the professor's chair.

When he lost Mr. Chorlton, his situation became uncomfortable. The enemies of the dissenters were numerous and bitter; he was prosecuted for instructing youth in academical learning; and there was a want of harmony in his flock. Some men do very well in a secondary station in difficult times, who are not qualified to hold the first place. Under the shadow of another they appear with respectability; but they have neither the prudence, nor the energy of character, which are necessary to enable them to stand alone. For six years Mr. Coningham strug-

gled with these difficulties, to the manifest injury of his peace of mind, and bodily health. When he removed from Manchester, the academy is supposed to have been dissolved.

He was invited to London to succeed Mr. Stretton, at Haberdasher's-hall, and spent the last four years of his life with that congregation, loving, and cordially beloved by them. He died in September, in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixteen, aged forty-seven. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. S. Wright, who, in addition to the circumstances already mentioned, says, "If we consider Mr. Coningham as a preacher, how well-furnished was his mind with what might both please and profit! How serious was his spirit, and how thoroughly affected with the things he spoke to others! How becoming the pulpit was his countenance, and how graceful his appearance! How grave his deportment, and how well chosen his words and expressions! If we consider him in prayer, he was a very skilful intercessor with Almighty God. If we consider his conversation, he was one that gave abundant proof of his loving our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and was mightily concerned for promoting a work of grace and regeneration in the souls of men." Had there never been a tutor without these qualifications, there would be more religion in the world than now exists.

Coventry was likewise the seat of a dissenting academy. When the act of uniformity received the royal assent, Dr. John Bryan, Dr. Obadiah Grew, and Mr. Samuel Bassnet, were ministering to the people of that town. Their exclusion from the churches excited general regret. But they still continued to

labour there, and they likewise rendered some assistance in training up young men for the ministry.

Dr. Bryan was the acquaintance and friend of all the pious people in his own and the neighbouring counties, and was esteemed above his brethren. Dr. Calamy says that "many came forth from his house into the ministry." Though some of these might be before the restoration, it is more than probable some of them were subsequent to that event. He died in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-five.

The excellencies of Dr. Grew were of a different kind. Less active than his colleague, he was a calm, sedate divine, but able and faithful in the ministry. He too is said to have assisted in academical labours. His death was in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-nine.

Thomas Shewell, M. A. ejected from Lenham, in Kent, succeeded Dr. Grew, and is said to have continued the academy. He lived only to the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-three.

Dr. Joshua Oldfield came in his place. His labours as a tutor, for which he was so justly famed, commenced here, and were more open, and more extensive, and more regular, than those of his predecessor. Persecution, the first-born child of satan, here laid hold of the good man, and occasioned him much expence, vexation, and sorrow. She came from the bishop's court, and after tormenting him there, and then in the civil courts, he was at last delivered from her fangs in consequence, it is supposed, of a rebuke from good king William, who intimated to the prelate that he was not pleased with such prosecutions.

That country is in a degraded and miserable state indeed, in which the power of instructing youth

depends on a licence from a priest, who may give or withhold it according to his pleasure : liberty, which gives the nation that enjoys it the pre-eminence above others, is in the last stage of a consumption, or ready to depart to some more favoured land. To the plea that such a precaution is necessary for the security of the government, all history gives the lie. Where can an example be found of a nation which has been treated liberally, and allowed, without interference of government, to prosecute their plans of literature and science, rising up against their rulers ? It will be easy to furnish many where the iron hands of spiritual and civil tyranny have become insupportable to the people ; and they have risen up in despair and indignation, and broken their chains over the heads of their oppressors. When there has not been spirit remaining for such an attempt, more fatal consequences have ensued : an aspiring conqueror has come upon them, and observing that the dastardly pusillanimity, which slavery had engendered, would render them an easy prey, has crushed them all, and compelled them to stoop to his domination<sup>1</sup>.

Dr. Oldfield was assisted in his academical instructions by Mr. Tong, who was likewise his fellow-labourer in the ministry. They were both men of superior abilities and learning, and of eminent good-

<sup>1</sup> The present time is fertile in examples of this mournful kind. But in opposition to them, let the British rulers of the House of Hanover, especially let his present Majesty have the praise of acting in respect to the education of the different sects, with the liberality which becomes the supreme magistrate of a free and enlightened people. By such a line of conduct must not persons of every denomination be powerfully attached to their country, and to its constitution and government ?

ness. About the year one thousand seven hundred, Dr. Oldfield, and soon afterwards Mr. Tong, were called away from Coventry to London. The academy then ceased, or rather was transferred by Dr. Oldfield to the capital.

Newington-green, near London, was, during this period, the favourite seat of the dissenting muses. Charles Morton, M. A. fixed his academy here. He was educated at Wadham college, Oxford, and afterwards presented to the rectory of Blisland, in Cornwall. His father had been minister there, but for his puritanism was forced to leave it in the days of Charles the first. The son, on the contrary, was strenuous for the ceremonies, and in all things a zealous conformist. When the civil wars commenced, he was astonished to see the vicious and the debauched all flock to the standard of the king, while the mass of the sober and serious part of the nation ranged themselves under the banners of the parliament. This led him to examine the subject, and the result was, that the keen prelatist became a strict puritan. These principles forced him out of the establishment in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two.

After the fire of London, in which he was a sufferer, he left his retreat in Cornwall, and went to the metropolis to attend to some temporal affairs. As he was known to have been, from his youth, a hard student, and to have made eminent attainments in the branches of learning connected with his profession, his friends earnestly pressed him to undertake the office of a theological tutor. He complied, and was engaged in the work almost twenty years; during which time he trained up many valuable men for the

dissenting ministry. He is to be enrolled among our tutors of the first class, both for the extent of his literature, and for a peculiar felicity in engaging the affections of his students, in inspiring them with the love of learning, and in rendering subjects plain which others made difficult. Dr. Calamy has happily preserved a paper of rules which he drew up for the use of his students: they do him great honour, and if attended to, must have done them much good. He also composed for them brief systems of the several sciences, which he enlarged on, and fully explained in his lectures.

In these evil days, when it was much safer to be a malefactor than a dissenter; and when a dissenting tutor was the most obnoxious being in England to the rulers both in church and state, he was harrassed by spies, by informers, by justices, and prosecutions. What unwelcome visitors these are to the seats of the muses; and how incongenial with the peaceful quiet of a theological school! At last, wearied out with a long succession of such vexations, and seeing no end of trouble, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-five he bid adieu to his native country, and sought a sanctuary in New England. He was chosen pastor of the church at Charleston, and died in the year one thousand seven hundred and six, at the advanced age of fourscore years.

When a minister's personal safety is not peculiarly endangered, he should not be forward to leave his native land in times of persecution. While there are private Christians to attend to, and hope of better days, it is generally his duty to abide amidst the storm. There are cases when both pastors and their



flocks are obliged to go into exile for the sake of the Gospel; and some, when the removal of a minister may be both lawful and a duty: but it is necessary to examine well that it be not without necessity. Three years more, and these not all of suffering, would have secured to Mr. Morton an old age of usefulness and comfort in the bosom of his friends. It is dangerous to permit the mind to be intoxicated with the fumes of a disordered imagination, and then to persuade itself that there is nothing but evil in the place or country where we reside, and nothing but pleasures or comforts in regions which are remote. Many have suffered bitterly for giving way to such unreasonable ideas.

When Mr. Morton was gone, Stephen Lobb, William Wickens, and Francis Glasscock, agreed to read lectures privately to his remaining students, and to others who wished to enjoy the advantages of academical instruction.

Stephen Lobb was pastor of an independent church in Fetter-lane, which subsists in a flourishing state to the present day. He received a liberal education, and entered into the ministry in the dark days of Charles the second, when a nonconformist could have none but spiritual motives to influence him in his choice. He settled with his flock in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-one, and continued to labour among them with activity and zeal till his decease in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-nine. The manner of it was designed to enforce the exhortation of our blessed Lord: "Be ye therefore ready also, for the Son of Man cometh in an hour when he think not." Dining at the

house of a friend, he was seized at table with a fit, and expired in the course of the day. He was a great favourite of James the second, and has suffered the severest censure for carrying up to him an address of thanks for the indulgence which he granted to the dissenters. But when a gang of assassins are tearing my flesh, and drinking my blood, and breaking my bones, without mercy; if satan's eldest son were to pass by, and drag mine adversaries off me, and rescue me from their murderous hands, I know not that it would be any crime to thank him for his merciful interposition, and his compassion to a poor tormented creature. And if Mr. Lobb could have prevailed as he wished, to obtain the repeal of the tests, would it merit condemnation to have prevented the guilt of, at least, a million of people, who were compelled by this law to take the sacrament; and in consequence of doing so, have appeared before the awful tribunal of Jehovah, chargeable with the crime of "eating and drinking damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body."

William Wickens, educated at Emanuel college, Cambridge, and afterwards a minister in London, till the act of conformity thrust him from his field of labour, took a part also in this work of tuition. He was a hard student all his days, and had attained such a measure of oriental learning as was equalled but by few. The originals of the Old and New Testament were so familiar to him that he scarcely ever made use of a translation. He was a master in the Jewish antiquities, a branch of study of far more importance for a minister than is usually conceived. Without it no one is qualified to be an expositor of the sacred writings. He preached to a congregation

of dissenters at Newington-green till near his death in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-nine, when he was in the eighty-fifth year of his age.

The third assistant was Francis Glasscock, who received his education in one of the universities in North Britain, and in the latter part of the reign of Charles the second was chosen pastor of a congregation which met in Drury-lane, and afterwards removed to Hanover-street, Long-acre. His talents, his learning, his piety, and his soundness in the faith, which procured for him, though a presbyterian, a place in the Pinner's-hall lecture, are spoken of by his contemporaries in a most respectful manner. He died in the year one thousand seven hundred and six.

There was another seminary on Newington-green, under the tuition of the celebrated Theophilus Gale, M. A. whose "Court of the gentiles" renders it unnecessary to say any thing in praise of his superior learning. He was a native of Devonshire, a student, and afterwards a fellow, of Magdalen college, Oxford, and a distinguished tutor there. In the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-seven he was chosen to be a stated preacher at Winchester cathedral, and he was held in high estimation among the people, both for the excellence of his discourses, and the purity of his life.

The restoration stripped them of all his preferments; and he afterwards travelled with two sons of Lord Wharton, and was abroad for several years. On his return to England, as he was on the way to London, he was alarmed with the sight of the city in flames. Amidst sympathy for the sufferings of others, the fear of personal loss rushed into his mind. He

had left his papers in the possession of a friend, whose house he soon found to be involved in the general calamity; and he bitterly lamented that the labours of many years were lost. But he was delighted with the grateful tidings that his desk had been thrown into the cart as an article just sufficient to make up the load, and that his treasure was safe. To this circumstance the world is indebted for the publication of his learned work.

Soon afterwards he appears to have been employed in assisting John Rowe, M. A. who, in the days of the commonwealth, was pastor of an independent church which met for worship in Westminster abbey: but the return of royalty obliged him to seek a more humble temple, which his people found first in Bartholomew-close, and afterwards at Haberdasher's-hall. When Mr. Rowe died, Mr. Gale was his successor. His superior attainments in learning, united with exemplary piety, eminently qualifying him for the office of a theological professor, he was happily influenced to engage in that honourable but arduous work; and he continued in it till his death, which took place in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-eight, in his fiftieth year.

His will was the will of a man of letters, and of a man concerned for the happiness of the human race, and who had none nearly related who either needed, merited, or could claim his help. All his real and personal estate he left for the education of promising young men, under the management of his non-conforming brethren. He bequeathed his library to Harvard college, in New England, except the philosophical books, which he reserved for students at home. How essential a service might many gentle-

men among the dissenters, who know that their libraries will fall into the hands of those who disregard them, or who cannot make use of them, render to the cause of piety and learning in their denomination, were they to leave a part, or the whole, of their books to the theological seminaries. With the exception of a few individuals, it is to their reproach that so little has been done in this way for a century past : or else what noble collections would each of them have contained. But it is not too late to remedy the evil. If good men who have valuable works in their possession, which they never use, were to present them to the tutors for the benefit of their students, and others were to bequeath a part at their death, the reproach would be wiped away, and the libraries in the dissenting academies would be such as they ought to be.

Mr. Gale's pecuniary benevolence merits no less praise. It has long been common for men of opulence to bequeath legacies to charitable institutions, and their families have never considered themselves as injured by the bequest. Were such of them as are men of piety to leave something to the funds of our seminaries, it would be a commendable act of Christian benevolence. By some it has been urged as an objection : " The seminary, in a course of years, may fall into improper hands, and what was given to propagate truth may be employed to diffuse error." But this perversion of sacred funds may be prevented by directing that the legacy shall be expended in the space of a few years in the instruction of pious youth for the work of the ministry. In this way a person may, with considerable certainty secure the expenditure of his legacy in a manner congenial to his wishes.

Thomas Rowe, the son of John, the independent preacher in Westminster-abbey, succeeded Theophilus Gale in the congregation, and in the academy. It is to be reflected on with peculiar pleasure, that the Lord Jesus raises up, from age to age, persons endued with gifts which qualify them to perform the most important and difficult services in his church. Mr. Gale's death was an unspeakable loss: but Thomas Rowe proved an able tutor, and the academy under his tuition was in a flourishing state. To considerable learning he united a most amiable disposition: his students loved him; he rendered the path of knowledge pleasing, and that conduces to make it easy.

He continued in his office till the year one thousand seven hundred and six. It is the will of God, and at the same time a dispensation of mercy, that some persons should, by the suddenness of their death, give warning to all their acquaintances of the uncertainty of life. Tutors and students need to be taught this necessary doctrine as well others, and to teach them Mr. Rowe was chosen. As he was riding in the streets of London he was seized with a fit, fell from his horse, and immediately expired. It was in the forty-ninth year of his age. He had the honour of educating many men of note in the literary world. John Hughes the poet, and Josiah Hort, archbishop of Tuam, were among the number of his students: but to have educated Dr. Watts entitles him to greater celebrity.

Thomas Doolittle, M. A. likewise claims a niche among the tutors of this class. Kidderminster was the place of his nativity; and he had the happiness of

sitting under the instructive, awakening, and powerful ministry of Mr. Baxter, whose discourses "on the Saints' Rest" were the means of his conversion. He went to college by his recommendation, and he studied at Pembroke-hall, Cambridge. When he left Cambridge, he went to London, where his lively, pungent preaching engaged attention, and he was chosen to the pastoral office in the church of St. Alphage, London-wall. After nine years of zealous labour, which it pleased God to crown with great success, the act of uniformity imposed silence on this faithful minister of Christ.

Being forbidden to preach, he appears to have taught a school; and when the plague commenced, by the advice of friends, he retired into the country with the scholars, whom he boarded in his house. On returning to town when the plague had ceased, having counted the cost, he began to preach at a plate which he fitted up in Bunhill-fields, and from thence he removed to a meeting-house which he built in Monkwell-street. After various troubles and vexations, when king Charles's indulgence was published, he had his place licenced, and preached the Gospel to a numerous audience. He likewise set up an academy at Islington to prepare young men for the dissenting ministry. He met with great encouragement, and his academy was, for some years, in a very flourishing state. But persecution drove him from his habitation, and his students were scattered. In that day men might be drunkards, lewd, and profane, with impunity, or with applause: but to preach out of a church, or without the common prayer, and what was considered still worse, to teach pious young men to preach the Gospel of Christ, were

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crimes to be punished with imprisonment and loss of goods.

In consequence of the Oxford act he removed to Wimbledon, and afterwards to Battersea. His pupils boarded in the neighbouring villages, and came by stealth to attend the lectures. While he lived at Battersea his goods were seized and sold. The act of toleration put a hook into the jaws of these ferocious wolves and tygers, and enabled Mr. Doolittle, without further molestation, to pursue the delightful labours of a pastor and a tutor. The academy is supposed to have been dissolved when the infirmities of years came upon him. He continued in the ministry with exemplary diligence till his death: and scarcely a minister in London was more successful: he took great delight in catechising, and the youth of his flock reaped the benefit of his catechetical instructions. He died in great peace and consolation in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, and the last of the non-conformist ministers who were ejected from the city of London. His works were numerous and useful.

Mr. Doolittle was assisted in his seminary by Thomas Vincent, a graduate of Christchurch, Oxford, and who had been ejected from the living of St. Mary Magdalen, Milk-street, London. When he found that the fatal plague was extending its ravages in the city, he acquainted his fellow-labourer with his design to leave his present employment for a season, and devote himself to the services of the afflicted citizens in the season of their distress. Mr. Doolittle having endeavoured to dissuade him, but without success, it was agreed to consult the most eminent



ministers in the neighbourhood. After Mr. Doolittle's reasons had been heard, Mr. Vincent acquainted his brethren, "that he had very seriously considered the matter before he had come to such a resolution. He had carefully examined the state of his own soul, and could look death in the face with comfort. He thought it absolutely necessary that such vast numbers of dying people should have some spiritual assistance. He could have no prospect of usefulness in the exercise of his ministry through his whole life, like that which now offered itself. He had often committed the case and himself to God in prayer; and upon the whole had solemnly devoted himself to the service of God and souls upon this occasion, and therefore hoped none of them would endeavour to weaken his hands in the work." When the ministers present had heard his reasons, they unanimously expressed their satisfaction and joy, and their persuasion that the matter was of God; and concurred in their prayers for his protection and success. He went out to his work with the greatest firmness and magnanimity. He constantly preached every Lord's-day through the whole visitation in some parish church. His subjects were the most moving and important; and his management of them the most pathetic and searching. The awfulness of the judgment then every where obvious gave a peculiar edge to the preacher and his auditors. Multitudes followed him wherever he went; and some were awakened by every sermon. He visited all that sent for him, without fear, and did the best he could for them in their extremity, especially to save their souls from death.

The world has its heroes, whom it holds up to universal admiration in the page of history. Here the church of Christ presents to us one of hers. The world calls us particularly to admire them as they advance to some arduous enterprize, where perils and death stare them in the face, but advancing with tranquillity of mind, with firmness of step, and determined either to conquer or to die. But which of them can be compared to this man! He sees the inhabitants of a city, from which he had been cast out as unworthy of the name of a minister of Christ, dying by the pestilence which was augmenting its destructive fury from day to day; and he cannot be restrained from rushing into the midst of them to rescue their immortal souls from miseries infinitely greater. He hastens into churches from which he was driven out, and proclaims to listening thousands the glad tidings of salvation, in pulpits, for entering which the law of the land dooms him to a dungeon; but a stronger law, the law of love to God and man, constrains him to publish the mercy of the Gospel to souls on the very brink of eternity. He goes into the house of pestilence, and the chambers of mortal disease, wherever the voice of misery invites him. His exhortations, his counsels, and his prayers, are ever at their call; and they ever flow from a compassionate heart, tenderly sympathising in their distress, and burning with zeal for their salvation. Great was the success of his labours; and during the plague a harvest of souls was reaped, exceeding what results from the painful exertions of many a faithful minister during the course of a long life of zeal.

Facts like these are the glory and beauty of ecclesiastical history. While the man of taste selects his

beautiful passages from Demosthenes, Cicero, and Virgil, and reads them with transport, the admirer of spiritual beauty will mark down this page of moral heroism, and read it, and read it again with admiration and delight. One leaf of such writing is worth more than scores of volumes of the disputes of ambitious prelates which glare forth in every century, and the bitter controversies of angry doctors. As long as Christ has a church on earth, and disciples animated with zeal for the glory of his name, Thomas Vincent will live, and let him have a distinguished niche in the temple of God. His writings all breathe forth the most affectionate ardour for the salvation of immortal souls; they savour of the minister who, for months, preached to congregations infected with the plague: they display the man of God: his conduct in the time of the pestilence proclaims him to be still more, if a more exalted name can possibly be given<sup>t</sup>.

When the plague had ceased he must retire, and give place to the conforming clergy, nearly all of whom it had chased away; and he must retire, thankful that the law does not lay hold of him, and punish him for his deeds. If he persevere, after health is restored to the city, and then dare to enter into a pulpit in a church, the horrors of a dungeon will be his sure reward. O, blessed Jesus, was it under the influence of thy Spirit that such a decree was framed? Was it not rather by the "wisdom which is from beneath, which is earthly, sensual, and devilish?"

<sup>t</sup> His example was followed by his non-conforming brethren Messrs. Chester, Janeway, Turner, Grimes, Franklin, and some others. Drs. Walker, Horton, and Meriton, and a few others of the conforming clergy remained at their post, but the generality fled.

Mr. Vincent afterwards preached to a numerous congregation of dissenters in London till his death, in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-eight.

Besides these tutors, who laboured in conjunction with colleagues or assistants, there was another class, consisting of persons who performed the whole duty themselves; and whose academies, as they began with themselves, so they terminated with their leisure or their life. Most of them were original non-conformists, but some were persons who had been trained up in their academies, or in other seats of learning.

John Shuttlewood, A. B. of Christ's college, Cambridge, was ejected from Raunston and Hoose, in Leicestershire. He was afterwards a very considerable sufferer for his non-conformity, and for his zeal in preaching the Gospel of Christ. Fines, imprisonments, and loss of goods, were more than once his lot. Pursued by the fury of the agents for conformity, he was compelled to change his habitation, and remove from place to place, in order to escape their hands. But sensible of the importance of life, and his obligations to improve his talents to the utmost, he persevered in doing good; and to his labours in the ministry of the word, he united the duties of the tutor of an academy. It was kept chiefly at Sulby, in Northamptonshire, and if we may judge of the number of his students from a memorandum, "that six entered in one year," it must at some times have been considerable.

He is highly spoken of for his talents and his learning, he was exceedingly acceptable and useful as a preacher, and he was greatly esteemed by the disciples of Christ in all the country around. His constitution, though robust, was prematurely worn out

with sufferings, and he died in the year one six hundred and eighty-eight, at the age of fifty-eight. Job Orton, half a century afterwards, informs us, that his name was still precious among the Christians at Sulby. The memory of the just shall be blessed.

One of the earliest tutors was Thomas Cole M. A. who was educated at Westminster school, and from thence elected student of Christchurch, Oxford. In the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-six, he was appointed principal of St. Mary's Hall. As a tutor in the college, his celebrity was considerable; and besides other pupils who attained to eminence in the church, he could boast of John Locke, to have been whose instructor is no common honour. Cast out of the university at the restoration, he retired to Nettlebed, in Oxfordshire, and there pursued his former employment, by instructing young men in liberal sciences and in theology. His station in the university is a sufficient voucher for his learning; and men, who knew him well at different periods of his life, speak in the highest terms of his piety. In his village seminary, many were trained up by him both for civil employments and the Christian ministry.

From Nettlebed he was called to the charge of a large congregation in London, and ministered to them till his death, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-seven. He was chosen one of the lecturers at Pinner's-hall, and took an active part in what was called the neonomian controversy. His last illness was an eminent display of devotion and comfort. He left behind him various writings, which attest his soundness in the faith, and intimate acquaintance with the doctrines of the Gospel.

John Woodhouse is to be numbered among the dissenting tutors in this period. After going through a course of studies in the university, he was employed as chaplain to a family of note, in the county of Nottingham. Prayers were, in these days, more customary in the mansions of the nobility and gentry than they are now ; piety and devotion were cultivated with greater attention ; and a chaplain was considered as an essential person in the family. It is with regret that we mention an alteration so disparaging to the present age.

While Mr. Woodhouse was in this situation, the act of uniformity passed, and he found himself unable to take his station in the established church. On leaving the family, of which he was the domestic minister, he settled at Sherrif Hales, in Shropshire, not only as a dissenting preacher, but as a dissenting tutor : and if we are allowed to judge of the character of the master from the proficiency of his scholars, he will stand high among those in his profession ; for he sent forth many excellent ministers into the church of Christ, and many respectable and useful characters were formed by him for important stations in civil society. He is celebrated for his skill in the conduct of his academy, by uniting the pursuits of literature and the cultivation of piety : and God honoured him to be the spiritual father of many of his pupils.

Religion was the great business of his life : it had been the object of concern from his youth. As he advanced in years he grew in grace, and may justly be considered as a man of superior sanctity and devotedness to God. With such principles reigning in his soul, it may naturally be supposed that his great care,

respecting his theological students, was that of which he made the greatest account himself, namely, "a faithful, diligent aim at usefulness, and saving immortal souls. He thought the best way to effect this was a plain, warm, familiar manner of preaching. He therefore chiefly regarded the frame of his own heart in his work, as what suggested the most moving words; and whence, by the divine blessing, he expected the greatest success."

Of fines and imprisonments, the lot of dissenting ministers in that day, he had his share, but he persevered in his labours, animated by love to God, and love to man. Necessity was not laid upon him from the indigence of external circumstances, for he was in possession of an ample fortune; but he felt the obligations which lay upon him to be useful, and he considered his talents as given to be improved. He educated several students intirely at his own expense, and was liberal towards those of his brethren who stood in need of relief.

On the death of Dr. Annesly, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-six, he was called to succeed him as pastor of the church in Little St. Helens, in London. In the year one thousand seven hundred, he ended his mortal course and deeds, in the exercise of faith, resignation, and hope.

He had been assisted in his academy by Mr. Southwell, who, after Mr. Woodhouse's departure, settled at Dudley, and instructed a few pupils, and from thence removed to Newbury.

Another tutor of superior eminence was Samuel

<sup>a</sup> Williams's Works, vol. II. Funeral Sermon for Mr. Woodhouse.

Cradock, B. D. who kept his academy at Wickhambrook, in Suffolk. He was fellow of Emanuel college, Cambridge, and presented by it to the valuable rectory of North Cadbury, in Somersetshire. The act of uniformity stripped him of his living: he cast himself on the providence of God, and his wants were amply supplied. The death of a relative put him in possession of a good estate at Wickhambrook, in Suffolk, to which he removed his abode, and he continued there for the space of six and twenty years. In his college, he had been a celebrated tutor; in his parish, an able and faithful preacher of the Gospel; and a writer of superior worth for the instruction of mankind.

Though he might have passed the latter part of life at his ease, in the character and habits of a country squire, he disdained the idea of wearing out his years in unprofitable indolence, or in the inferior cares of an estate, but sought by what means, with his talents and acquirements, he might do as much good as possible to those of his own age, and to succeeding generations. With this view he resumed all his former employments. His house was opened to all who would come, and he preached the Gospel to them freely from week to week. He opened an academy too, for teaching the various parts of learning which he had formerly taught at Cambridge.

Dr. Calamy studied under him for two years, and chiefly applied himself to logic, metaphysics, and natural and moral philosophy. From his account it appears that Mr. Cradock had then about twenty students, and these almost equally divided between theology, and the sciences which qualify for the pursuits of civil life. He speaks in the highest terms of



his literary character, and of the candour and goodness of his conduct as a tutor. His books exhibit an undeniable testimony both of his learning and his piety. His "Knowledge and Practice," which he published at Cadbury, and afterwards enlarged to a folio volume, is one of the best systems of divinity which a plain man can read. He afterwards added "The Harmony of the Evangelists" in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-two, and "The Old Testament History Methodised" in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-eight, and "The Apostolical History" in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-three, all in folio; each discovering extensive knowledge, a sound judgment, an intimate acquaintance with the sacred writings; and all highly useful to the biblical student. In the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-two he published a brief exposition of the Apocalypse.

The last ten years of his life he spent at Bishop Stortford, as pastor of a church in that town; and he died there in the year one thousand seven hundred and six, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

Ralph Button, another ejected minister, was tutor of an academy at Islington. He was educated at Exeter college, Oxford, and afterwards became a fellow of Merton, and was a tutor of note. When the parliament wrested Oxford, and the regulation of its university out of the hands of the king, Mr. Button was appointed orator of the university, and canon of Christchurch. It was common for men in such offices to be invested with the highest honorary degrees; but Anthony Wood says, that Mr. Button being about to be married at the time, was unwilling to

incur the expense, and therefore did not apply along with Thomas Goodwin, and some others, but remained all his days with the humble epithet of A. M. In the opinion of many his judgment will appear far from unwise in preferring an amiable spouse, and the comforts of matrimony, to the title of D. D.

The restoration deprived him of all his university honours and emoluments. Retiring to Brentford, he conducted the education of the sons of two knights in the neighbourhood, for which crime he suffered six months imprisonment. When the times became more favourable, he opened an academy at Islington; and trained up many young persons both for the dissenting ministry, and for secular employments; and continued in this work till his death, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty. Sir Joseph Jekyll, who rose to some of the highest offices in the law, and made so conspicuous a figure in the political world after the revolution, was one of Mr. Button's students. His station in the university, at a time when learning was cultivated with an ardour which no former nor later period has exceeded, secures his character for learning. Mr. Baxter, an accurate judge of men, says, that "he was an excellent scholar: and what is better, a most humble, worthy, godly man, of a plain sincere heart and blameless."

Edward Veal, M. A. was another of the London tutors during this period. His education for the ministry he received at Christchurch, Oxford. He afterwards went over to Dublin, and became a senior fellow of Trinity college. Returning to England for ordination, which he obtained from a presbytery in Lancashire, he visited Ireland a second time, and

exercised the office of the ministry there for several years. The return of episcopacy stripped him both of his church and of his fellowship; and in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty one, he came back to his native country. The act of uniformity soon following prevented him from accepting church preferment consistently with his principles. After a time, he gathered a dissenting congregation in Wapping, and continued to preach to them till the infirmities of years compelled him to resign his charge.

While he was in the university, he had acquired celebrity as a tutor: to extend therefore the sphere of his usefulness, he became the professor of a dissenting academy, and had the honour to train up some very respectable and excellent ministers. He died in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight, at the age of seventy-seven years. His funeral sermon, by his successor Mr. Simmonds, is said to have been, for the sake of convenience, preached in the parish church at Wapping.

These all ranked among those honourable men who suffered an expulsion from the church of England; but there were others who, having received their education under the earliest non-conformist tutors, or at foreign seats of learning, rendered essential service to the dissenting cause by the instruction of their youth for the ministry of the Gospel.

Of this number was Benjamin Robinson. He was educated under Mr. Woodhouse, at Sherrif Hales. After he left the academy, he resided for some years as a chaplain in two families of rank; and while in that situation, he preached in the country around with distinguished zeal and eminent success. He

afterwards settled at Findern, in Derbyshire, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight. For keeping school there, he was in that ill-natured age grievously harrassed by the spiritual court. It is not a little to his honour that he attracted the notice of the great Mr. Howe, who entertained a peculiar affection for him ; and who, from what he observed of his talents and his temper, formed great expectations of his superior usefulness.

By his counsel, Mr. Robinson accepted the call to a church at Hungerford, in Berkshire: he remained there for seven years, and in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-six undertook the education of young men for the ministry. For this office he was qualified in an eminent degree. Talents of the first order, extensive reading, a quickness of conception, which led one who knew him to say, "that he could do as much in an hour, as another man could in a day," an accurate knowledge of the sacred writings, an entire devotedness to God, and ardent zeal for his glory, all were united in him, and formed a character which adorned the professor's chair. His success is said to have corresponded with his powers. On the death of Mr. Woodhouse, he removed to London, and laboured with faithfulness in the work of the ministry till his death, in the year one thousand seven hundred and twenty-two.

While he resided in Berkshire, particular notice was taken of his zeal for the improvement of younger ministers. It was his aim to inspire them with proper sentiments and dispositions, to allure them to habits of vigorous application to study, and to rouse them to earnest and persevering exertions in their Master's cause. It may perhaps be questioned whether

ministers, venerable for their years and other excellencies, are sufficiently sensible of all the good which they might do to their junior brethren, and of their obligations to do it. On the other hand, how highly ought younger ministers to prize counsels, the result of long and often dearly-bought experience ! There is wisdom of the highest order to be gained early in this way, which is not to be gained in any other. That petulance, which will lead any to despise and to reject such instructions, demonstrates the young man's utter unfitness for the ministry of the Gospel".

John Payne, who was pastor of a church at Saffron Waldon, presided over a seminary there. He was the friend of Dr. Owen, visited him on his death-bed, and was entrusted with the publication of his *Meditations on the Glory of Christ*. He flourished in the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. Dr. Guyse and Mr. Rawlin were educated under him, and some other ministers of note among the independents.

Pinner, in Middlesex, was the seat of an academy kept by Thomas Goodwin, the dissenting minister of the place. To be descended from the wise and good, is one of the highest honours, and it was his lot. His father Dr. Thomas Goodwin was known as one of the five independent ministers in the assembly at Westminster, and as president of Magdalene college, Oxford, in the days of the commonwealth. His numerous writings exhibit him to us as a singularly able, learned, and pious man.

His son received the first part of his education in

▼ Robinson's Funeral Sermon and Life by Cumming.

England, and the last in Holland. On his return home, he was engaged, along with three other young ministers, in carrying on an evening lecture at a coffee-house in the city, which was supported and attended by some of the first merchants in London. This was in the reign of Charles the second. In the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-three, he made the tour of Europe in company with Mr. Shower and some other gentlemen. When he came back to England, he was, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-five, chosen to assist Mr. Stephen Lobb at Fetter Lane; and continued there till that gentleman's death in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-nine, when he removed to Pinner. He continued in the pastoral office in that place to his death, and for many years exercised the additional function of a theological tutor. He is commended by Dr. Calamy as "a person of great and universal literature, and of a most gentle and obliging temper, and who lived usefully upon his estate\*."

The length of time which has elapsed since the first period of this history prevents us from giving so particular an account as we could wish of several of the dissenting tutors. This is the case with John Kerr. He was a native of Scotland, and after having studied in one of its universities, completed his education at Leyden, and took the degree of M. D. From Holland, he came to London, and engaged in the instruction of young men for the ministry. Dr. Calamy, who was personally acquainted with him, says, "that he was a gentleman of considerable learning, and celebrated as a tutor, having trained up a number of persons who have been and still are very

\* Calamy's Continuation, p. 96.

useful in the world." The seat of his academy was first at Highgate, and afterwards at Clerkenwell. He appears to have been a tutor some time before the end of the seventeenth century.

Besides these who have been enumerated, who may be said to have been tutors of academies, there were others who either occasionally superintended the instruction of individuals, or prepared them for regular seminaries, or completed their education. A list of them will be given, as their labours in this department entitle them to remembrance, while a particular account might be considered as too minute.

The excellent John Flavel, B. A. of Dartmouth, trained up four young men for the ministry : and to one of them who was poor, besides a free education which was given to them all, he added maintainance at his own expence. If these men had nothing else to value themselves for, they might at least boast of their tutor.

Edward Reyner, M. A. of Lincoln, one of the most eminent ministers of his day, after his ejection, devoted a portion of his time to the instruction of young men for the dissenting ministry ; but the extent of his labours cannot now be ascertained.

John Whitlock and Edward Reynolds, both ejected ministers of Nottingham, who lived for more than fifty years in affection superior to that of brothers, and always under the same roof, applied some part of their leisure to this important service. Mr. Hardy is mentioned as an instructor of youth in the same town.

Henry Hickman, B. D. deprived of his fellowship in the college, settled after a time, near Stourbridge, where, says Dr. Calamy, " he took pupils, and read lectures in logic and philosophy.

Philip Henry, who superintended the education of his own children, and of the sons of some neighbouring gentlemen, used to have a young person designed for the ministry to assist him, and was helpful to several of them, in succession, by communicating to them the rudiments of academical learning. To praise Philip Henry is superfluous.

Instruction for the ministry, among the dissenters, which was communicated so extensively in England at this time, reached likewise to Wales.

Samuel Jones, M. A. fellow of Jesus college, Oxford, and for several years a tutor there, was ejected by the act of uniformity from the living of Llangynwydd, in Glamorganshire. He continued a laborious preacher of the Gospel though he suffered bitterly for his non-conformity, and was " in prisons oft." He set up an academy in his house, and recommended himself so well to the nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood, as to be entrusted with the education of their sons. He had likewise a number of divinity students, whom he prepared for the dissenting ministry.

His qualifications, in the judgment of his contemporaries, were by no means defective. He was master of the Greek and Latin tongues, a good orientalist, an adept in philosophy, a skilful casuist, well read in modern controversies, and an acceptable and very useful preacher. To his intellectual acquirements, he united a superior measure of Christian graces. A most hum-



ble, affectionate and peaceful disposition was conspicuous in him: and all was crowned with consummate prudence. Distressing pains from the stone, the rack of ministers in that age, often afflicted him, and called forth the exercise of faith and patience. The year before his death, a report being circulated that he had conformed, he was anxious to contradict it, and to assert his perseverance in dissent, and his full persuasion of the goodness of the principles on which he acted in his non-conformity<sup>r</sup>. He died in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-seven, in the seventieth year of his age.

Besides Mr. Jones, there were several ministers in Wales of peculiar note. Mr. Stephen Hughes of Carmarthen, Mr. Samuel Jones of Brynllwarch, Hugh Owen of Montgomeryshire, Marmaduke Matthews of Swansea, Peregrine Philips of Heverfordwest, and a few others, who, though not regular tutors, occasion-

<sup>r</sup> In a letter to a friend he expresses himself thus: "I declare to you and all the world, as in the words of a dying man, that I had not (at the time referred to), and have not since the least check in my conscience for my non-submission to these impositions which were then made the indispensable terms of communion with the church of England. I confess that I had then and have still, a very honourable respect for the able and conscientious ministers of it. But to declare my unfeigned assent and consent, and to deny my former ordination, to swallow several oaths, and to crouch under the burden of several impositions, were such blocks which the law had laid at the church door, that upon mature consideration I could not, durst not then, and dare not now leap over, though to save my credit and livelihood, though to gain dignity and preferment without odious hypocrisy, and the overthrowing of my inward peace, which is and ought to be dearer to me than my very life. To this choice I was then led, not by the examples of other leading men, nor with any design that others should be led by mine. This is the living testimony of, sir, your dying friend, S. J." Calamy, vol. ii. p. 721, 722.

ally assisted in preparing young men of talents and piety for the service of the sanctuary. For want of earlier attention to the subject, the names of other worthy men, which deserved to be enrolled in the list of tutors, are irrecoverably lost; but they are inscribed in a more durable record.

## SECTION III.

## METHOD OF EDUCATION IN THE DISSENTING SEMINARIES.

**T**O some readers, the enumeration of so many places of education will, from the similarity which necessarily occurs, appear tedious. But justice would not be rendered to the tutors, nor the history of the dissenters be complete, unless every institution was particularly noticed. Besides, the account will be interesting to those who wish to be fully masters of the subject, and to be intimately acquainted with the transactions of their religious, if not also their natural progenitors.

The number of the seminaries will excite surprize ; and how to account for it, many will feel a difficulty. But if the situation of the non-conformist ministers be considered, and the principles, by which they were governed, be taken into view, a sufficient reason will be found for the existence of them all.

Necessity is one of the grand springs of human conduct, and produces the most astonishing effects. It gives application to the schoolboy, it fires the mind of youth with a desire of excellence, it augments the energy of the soul in maturer years, and it maintains and lengthens out the exercise of the mental powers to a remote old age. To this principle the world is indebted for some of the ablest statesmen, the most renowned philosophers, the most celebrated historians, and the greatest divines.

Into the arms of necessity did the act of uniformity

throw a considerable number of the dissenting ministers ; and she compelled them to labour in those departments for which they were qualified by education, talents, or habits of life. Tithes no longer filled their barns, nor money collected by the power of law their purse. But their wives and children as well as they themselves, still were hungry and thirsty, and their clothes wore out, and they needed a house to dwell in ; and these must be procured. A natural inquiry arose, " what can I do to procure them, though not in the former abundance, yet in such a measure as to suffice." Out of this reasoning dissenting academies arose.

To necessity, another principle was added, equally powerful, but more sublime, namely, a desire to promote the honour of God, and the happiness of mankind. When necessity pleaded that something must be done for their support, the nobler principle dictated that it should be the employment in which they could be most useful, and do most good. Along with the ministry of the Gospel which they considered as the first object, the office of a tutor naturally presented itself to their view. As many of them had formerly acted in this capacity at the university, their qualifications for it, and the facilities, which they had acquired for the discharge of its duties, would recommend it to their adoption.

In this way may the number of tutors be accounted for ; but that they should find students, some may think more difficult to be explained. When the greater part of the seminaries of this period commenced, the times were remarkably unfavourable to dissenters, and promised little besides poverty, persecution, and contempt. That in such circumstances, young men should come forth into the ministry, may

be, to many, a matter of surprize. But it should be recollected, that there were among them, a numerous class of young men of tried and eminent piety, and that a portion of these will always be animated with the most fervent zeal to engage in the work of the ministry, from the desire which they feel for the salvation of immortal souls. Though the difficulties which presented themselves close at hand, were undoubtedly formidable, the ardour of the soul, at that period of life, surmounts them; and the glowing picture, which the imagination forms of halcyon days when the impending storm is blown over, enables them to bear existing hardships without complaint. In times of trial, the mind acquires a corresponding tone, and is made up to face perplexities, the very sight of which would overwhelm those who live in a season of tranquillity and ease.

Their prospects were indeed exceedingly gloomy. The state of the dissenters was singular. Whether they were to have a continued existence seemed doubtful. They were placed in a new situation. The wisest could not divine what was to come to pass. Time alone could reveal the mystery. They hoped for better days; but if things only continued as they then were, the congregations, which were established, would require a succession of pastors: death would remove the present ministers, and others would be needed to fill their place. Here was both employment and provision.

For more than half a century after the act of uniformity was enforced, an expectation was entertained by many, that a comprehension would take place, and such alterations be made in the services of the church, that the greater part of the dissenting ministers

might be admitted within her pale. Should such an event occur, they would be received along with their seniors into the bosom of the establishment, and take their station among her parish priests. A university education was not then considered a necessary thing; and persons taught in dissenting seminaries found a ready entrance into the church.

But young persons designed for the ministry were not the only students in the academies of that period. The sons of the most respectable gentry, and of some of the nobility were educated there. One of Mr. Frankland's first scholars was a son of sir Thomas Liddel: one half of Mr. Cradock's students were the sons of the landed gentlemen in the neighbourhood: and in most of them, a certain number of the youths was designed for the employments of civil life. When the schism bill was debating in the upper house, Lord Wharton reproached Harley, earl of Oxford, with its severity, and asked if this was the reward which he conceived to be due to those very tutors from whom he received the education which made him so great a man.

There was at that time a considerable number of moderate and respectable men among the laity, who did not enter into the feelings of the clergy; but considered the non-conformist ministers as treated with unjustifiable harshness, and reduced to a state which covered their enemies with disgrace. They felt the highest respect for them as good men, and thought that it was their duty to alleviate their sufferings. They conceived that their children could not be placed in a situation more favourable to knowledge and virtue, than in the hands of the dissenting tutors; and that from them they might receive the advantages

of a liberal education, without being exposed to the temptations of the universities.

As by the oaths required at Oxford and Cambridge, the dissenters were excluded from their literary advantages, it would have been but a small degree of indulgence to allow them peaceably to enjoy the benefit of their newly-formed academies, and to be instructed there without envy or molestation. But such a display of forbearance did not accord with the hot, intolerant, and haughty spirit of that age. Both violence and reasoning were employed for their destruction. Had the former been as harmless as the latter, it would have been well.

The government, in the reign of Charles, had always individuals in office, who felt the malicious passions of a little mind, and delighted in exercising their authority to harrass the non-conformists. Rude country justices of the peace, to whom it would be difficult to find any parallel in the present state of society; men who knew nothing beyond their horses and their dogs, and who, to the ignorance of the former, united the surliness of the latter, and whose beastly lives were reprov'd by the piety and zeal of the non-conformists, were their implacable enemies, and exerted all their influence for the destruction of these holy men. A portion of the clergy too, some of them reclining on the episcopal bench, and others in every subordinate gradation of office, the dissenters felt to be their bitter and irreconcilable foes. By their sermons, the public mind was roused against them, and by their influence with men in office, they goaded on both ministers of state, and justices of the peace to treat them with all the severity which they

could provoke. Academies, as tending to perpetuate the opinions which they abhorred, were the objects of their keenest hatred. To crush them, the hand of violence was lifted up; and if it could not succeed, no blame was due for want either of desire or exertion, to accomplish the design. The frequent removals of Mr. Frankland, and the dispersion of Mr. Doolittle's school furnish a specimen of high church malice, and of the sufferings of dissenting tutors and students.

Reasoning was employed in aid of violence for their destruction: it struck at the moral character of the tutors, and endeavoured to brand them with the crime of perjury. In ancient times, a succession of riots, and brawls, and fightings having disgusted some members of the universities, they fixed their abode at Stamford, and they began with considerable success to form an Athens there, and to dispense degrees as in the old seats of learning. Oxford and Cambridge alarmed at the sight of this unexpected rival, courted the return of its members to their former places of abode, and they succeeded in the attempt. To prevent a similar evil in future, both universities framed an oath, which remains to the present day, by which every graduate is obliged to swear, that he will not at Stamford, or any where in England, resume, or begin (*lectiones suas solenniter*), or receive, or confer a degree, as in an university<sup>2</sup>.

This transaction took place some hundred years before the reformation, but was now applied to the non-conformists, and brought forward against the instructors of their youth. By keeping private academies, they were said to have broken their oaths, and to have polluted their souls with the stains of perjury.

<sup>2</sup> Fuller's Church History.



In the present day, when ancient institutions, and university statutes, which boast an existence of five hundred years, are treated with no greater veneration than they can claim from their intrinsic worth, the objection, if adduced, would be thought unworthy of an answer; and we should account the laugh of ridicule a fitter weapon of defence than the gravity of reasoning. "Away with the tyrannical statute, it would be said, and abate the nuisance; it savours so strongly of the most abominable filth of popery, that a person who has his senses exercised to discern good and evil, is in danger of being suffocated by the abominable smell."

To view the oath in the most favourable light, it is reprehensible, because it is useless; and the multiplication of oaths without cause is to be blamed. If it be designed, as it originally appears to have been, to oppose the erection of another university, that depends not on the professors of Oxford and Cambridge, but on the British legislature which, if it chose, would establish two more, and which would consider this oath as a feeble barrier to its authority, and as a rude attempt to oppose its power. Designed against dissenters it could not be, because for centuries afterwards there were none. But if it be pointed against them it is wicked. They claim no right to confer degrees: no honorary titles did they ever take upon them to give. Their sole aim was to convey useful knowledge. And would the universities, by their oaths, presume to impede the progress of knowledge? Would they prevent a man from teaching his own children and the children of his friends, the same as he himself was once taught at the full school? When they have, by

oaths, required what many worthy men could not conscientiously perform, are they, when thus excluded, to bury their learning in their own bosom, and those who adhere to them to be doomed to unavoidable ignorance?

Would not the liberal spirit of scholars and of Christians have led them to rejoice in the diffusion of knowledge by the dissenting tutors; and as their youth could not consistently with their principles come to Oxford and Cambridge, that they had persons qualified to teach them elsewhere. Few, we believe, will now stand up in defence of those who brought this accusation against the first generation of our tutors; but it was gravely urged at the time, and both Mr. Morton and Mr. Cradock were at the pains to draw up a grave defence of their conduct\*.

In the dissenters of the present day, there will be a general wish to know what was taught, and what was the mode of instruction in the seminaries during this period. When it is considered that the tutors had received their education in the universities, and that some of them were engaged in the business of tuition in their colleges, it may naturally be supposed, that in their new seminaries, they entered on the same departments of literature, and adopted the same methods of instruction, which were used by themselves before, and which were regularly employed in the universities, as best adapted to the improvement of the studious youth. In confirmation of this general reasoning, the accounts which have been handed down to us of the method of study in the academies lead us to conclude, that this was the case.

The Greek and Latin classics were an important

\* Calamy's Continuation, p. 177—197, 732—735.

object of attention : logic, metaphysics, natural and moral philosophy, rhetoric, theology, and biblical criticism appear to have been comprised in the ordinary course of a student for the ministry.

In Mr. Owen's life, there is a list of the books which he used by way of text or syllabus to enlarge on in his lectures to his scholars<sup>b</sup>.

Samuel Palmer, the advocate of the dissenting academies, gives us the following account of his tutor's plan of education, and of the employments of the students in their different classes.

" It was our custom to have lectures appointed to certain times, and we began the morning with logic : system which we read was Hereboord, which is the the same as is generally read at Cambridge. But our tutor always gave us Memoriter the Harmony, or opposites made to him by other logicians ; and of these the most diligent took notes, and all were advised to read Smiglecius, Colbert, Ars Cogitandi, and Le Clerc, or whatever books of that nature we occasionally met with. Being initiated in philosophical studies by this art, we made another step of reading Goveani Elenctica, which being done, the next superior class read metaphysics, of which Fromenius's Synopsis was our manual, and by directions of our tutor, we were assisted in our chambers by Baronius Suarez, and Colbert. Ethics was our next study, and our system Hereboord ; in reading which our tutor recommended to our meditation Dr. Henry More,

<sup>b</sup> In logic, Burgersdicius, Hereboord, Ramus : in metaphysics, Fromenius, Eustachius, Baronius : in physics, Le Clerc, Du Hamel : in geometry, Pardie's Elements, Euclid : in astronomy, Gassendus : in chronology, Strauchius : in ecclesiastical history, Spanhemius : in theology, Wollebius, Ryssenius's Abstract of Turretine.

Marcus Antoninus, Epictetus, with the comments of Arrian and Simplicius, and the morals of Solomon; and under this head, the moral works of the great Puffendorf. The highest class was engaged in natural philosophy, of which Le Clerc was our system, whom we compared with the ancients and other moderns, as Aristotle, Des Cartes, Colbert, Staire, &c. We disputed every other day in Latin upon the several philosophical controversies; and as these lectures were read off, some time was set apart to introduce rhetoric, in which that short piece of John Gerard Vossius was used in the school, but in our chambers we were assisted by his larger volume, Aristotle, and Tully de Oratore. These exercises were all performed every morning, except that on Mondays we added as a divine lecture, some of Buchanan's Psalms, the finest of the kind, both for purity of language, and exact sense of the original: and on Saturdays, all the superior classes declaimed by turns, four and four, on some noble and useful subject, such as *De Pace*, *Logicane magis inserviat cæteris disciplinis an Rhetorica*, *De connubio virtutis cum doctrina*, &c. and I can say, that these orations were, for the most part, of uncommon elegance, purity of style, and manly and judicious composure.

"After dinner our work began in order by reading some one of the Greek or Latin historians, orators, or poets, of which first I remember Sallust, Quintus Curtius, Justin, and Paterculus; of the second, Demosthenes, Tully, and Isocrates's select Orations; and of the last, Homer, Virgil, Juvenal, Persius, and Horace. This reading was the finest and most delightful to young gentlemen of all others, because it was not in the pedantic method of common schools: but the delicacy of our tutor's criticisms, his exact de-

scription of persons, terms, and places illustrated by referring to Rosin and other antiquarians, and his just application of the morals, made such a lasting impression, as rendered all our other studies more facile. In geography, we read Dionysii Periegesis compared with Cluverius, ed. Bunonis, which at this lecture always lay upon the table.

“ Mondays and Fridays we read divinity, of which the first lecture was always in the Greek Testament; and it was our custom to go through it once a year, we seldom read less than six or seven chapters, and this was done with the greatest accuracy. We were obliged to give the most curious etymons, and were assisted with the Synopsis Criticorum, Martinus, Favorinus, and Hesychius’s Lexicons, and it was expected that the sacred geography, and chronology should be particularly observed and answered too at demand, of which I never knew my tutor sparing. The other divinity lecture was on Synopsis Puffloris Theologiæ as very accurate and short; we were advised to read by ourselves the more large pieces of Turretine, Theses Salmurienses, Baxter’s Methodus Theologiæ, and archbishop Usher’s, and on particular controversies many excellent authors, as on original sin, Placæus, and Barlow de Natura Mali; on grace and free will, Rutherford, Strangius, and Amyraldus; on the popish controversy, Amesius, Bellarminus Enervatus, and the modern disputes during the reign of king James; on Episcopacy, Altare Damascenum, bishop Hall and Mr. Baxter; bishop Stillingfleet’s Irenicum, Dr. Owen and Rutherford; and for practical divinity, Baxter, Tillotson, Charnock; and in a word, the best books both of the episcopalian, presbyterian, and independent divines were in their order recommended, and

constantly used by those of us who were able to procure them; and all, or most of them, I can affirm were the study of all the pupils.

“ I must not pass this over without an observation or two to the honour of my tutor, that I never heard him make one unhandsome reflection on the church of England, and that on all controversial points he never offered to impose on the judgment of his pupils.

“ I have not said any thing of the affairs of our house and our social conversation, which in the most was unexceptionable. My tutor began the morning with public prayer, in the school, which he performed with great devotion, but not with equal elegance and beauty in English; but in Latin, in which he often prayed, no man could exceed him for exact thought, curious style, and devout pathos.

“ At divinity lectures, the eldest pupils prayed; in these I often joined with peculiar delight, and went away with a raised mind. Men of lesser genius were allowed forms of their own composure, or others as they thought proper. Prayer in the family was so esteemed, that I do not know that it was once omitted; and to prevent any disorder, nine o'clock was the latest hour for any person to be abroad. Obscene or profane discourse, if known, would have procured expulsion, and the smallest vanities reproof, which my tutor knew how to give with a just and austere resentment.” P. 4—7.

Mr. Cradock is said to have drawn up systems on the different sciences for himself, which his students were required to copy for their own use.

One of the fullest accounts of the methods of education in that period is given by Thomas Secker, a

student at the academy of Mr. Jones at Gloucester, to Dr. Watts. As Mr. Secker, who was there educated for the ministry among the dissenters, became afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, his statement will be read with the livelier interest.

“ Rev. Sir,

*Gloucester, Nov. 18. 1711.*

“ Before I give you an account of the state of our academy, and those other things you desired me, please to accept of my hearty thanks for that service you have done me, both in advising me to prosecute my studies in such an extraordinary place of education, and in procuring me admittance into it. I wish my improvements may be answerable to the advantages I enjoy; but however that may happen, your kindness has fixed me in a place where I may be very happy, and spend my time to good purpose; and where if I do not, the fault will be all my own.

“ I am sensible how difficult it is to give a character of any person or thing, because the most probable guesses we make very often prove false ones. But since you are pleased to desire it, I think myself obliged to give you the best and most impartial account of matters I can.

“ Mr. Jones then, I take to be a man of real piety, great learning, and an agreeable temper; and one, who is very diligent in instructing all under his care, very well qualified to give instructions, and whose well managed familiarity will always make him respected. He is very strict in keeping good order, and will effectually preserve his pupils from negligence and immorality. And accordingly I believe there are not many academies freer in general from those vices than we are. In particular, my bedfellow, Mr. Scot, is one

of unfeigned religion, and a diligent searcher after truth. His genteel carriage and agreeable disposition gain him the esteem of every one. Mr. Griffith is more than ordinary serious and grave, and improves more in every thing than one could expect from a man who seems to be not much under forty ; particularly in Greek and Hebrew he has made a great progress. Mr. Francis and Mr. Watkins are diligent in study, and truly religious. The elder Mr. Jones, having had a better education than they, will, in all probability, make a greater scholar ; and his brother is one of quick parts.

“ Our logic, which we have read over once, is so contrived as to comprehend all Hereboord, and the greater part of Mr. Locke’s Essay, and the Art of Thinking. What Mr. Jones dictated to us was but short, containing a clear and brief account of the matter, references to the places, where it was more fully treated of, and remarks on, or explications of the authors cited, when need required. At our next lecture we gave an account both of what the author quoted, and our tutor said, who commonly then gave us a larger explication of it, and so proceeded to the next thing in order. He took care, as far as possible, that we understood the sense as well as remembered the words of what we had read, and that we should not suffer ourselves to be cheated with obscure terms which had no meaning. Though he be no great admirer of the old logic, yet he has taken a great deal of pains both in explaining and correcting Hereboord, and has for the most part made him intelligible, or shewn that he is not so.

“ The two Mr. Jones, Mr. Francis, Mr. Watkins, Mr. Sheldon, and two more gentlemen are to begin



**Jewish antiquities in a short time.** I was designed for one of their number, but rather chose to read logic once more ; both because I was utterly unacquainted with it when I came to this place, and because the others having all, except Mr. Francis, been at other academies, will be obliged to make more haste than those in a lower class, and consequently cannot have so good or large accounts of any thing, nor so much time to study every head. We shall have gone through our course in about four year's time, which I believe nobody that knows Mr. Jones will think too long.

“ I began to learn Hebrew soon as I came hither, and find myself able now to construe, and give some grammatical account of about twenty verses in the easier parts of the Bible, after less than an hour's preparation. We read every day two verses a-piece in the Hebrew Bible which we turn into Greek, (no one knowing which his verses shall be, though at first it was otherwise), and this with logic is our morning's work.

“ Mr. Jones also began about three months ago some critical lectures in order to the exposition you advised him to. The principal things contained in them are about the antiquity of the Hebrew language, letters, vowels, the incorruption of the Scriptures, ancient divisions of the Bible, an account of the Talmud, Masora, and Cabala. We are at present upon the Septuagint, and shall proceed after that to Targumim, and other versions, &c. Every part is managed with abundance of perspicuity. and seldom any material thing is omitted that others have said on the point, though very frequently we have useful additions of things which are not to be found in them. We have scarce been upon any thing yet, but Mr. Jones

has had those writers which are most valued on that head, to which he always refers us. This is what we first set about in the afternoon, which being finished we read a chapter in the Greek Testament, and after that mathematics. We have gone through all that is taught of algebra and proportion, with the six first books of Euclid, which is all Mr. Jones designs for the gentlemen I mentioned above, but he intends to read something more to the class that comes after them.

“This is our daily employment, which in the morning takes up about two hours, and something more in the afternoon, Only on Wednesdays in the morning, we read Dionysius’s *Périegesis*, on which we have notes mostly geographical, but with some criticisms intermixed; and in the afternoon we have no lecture at all. So on Saturday in the afternoon, we have only a thesis, which none but they, who have done with logic, have any concern in. We are also just beginning to read Isocrates and Terence each twice a week. On the latter, our tutor will give us some notes which he received in a college from Perizonius.

“We are obliged to rise at five of the clock every morning, and to speak Latin always, except when below stairs amongst the family. The people, where we live, are very civil, and the greatest inconvenience we suffer is, that we fill the house rather too much, being sixteen in number besides Mr. Jones. But I suppose, the increase of his academy will oblige him to remove next spring. We pass our time very agreeably betwixt study and conversation with our tutor, who is always ready to discourse freely of any thing that is useful, and allows us either then or at lecture all imaginable liberty of making objections

against his opinion, and prosecuting them as far as we can. In this and every thing else he shews himself so much a gentleman, and manifests so great an affection and tenderness for his pupils, as cannot but command respect and love. I almost forgot to mention our tutor's library which is composed for the most part of foreign books, which seem to be very well chosen, and are every day of great advantage to us.

"Thus I have endeavoured, sir, to give you an account of all I thought material or observable amongst us. As for my own part, I apply myself with what diligence I can to every thing which is the subject of our lectures, without preferring one subject before another; because I see nothing we are engaged in, but what is either necessary, or extremely useful for one who would thoroughly understand those things, which most concern him, or be able to explain them well to others. I hope I have not spent my time, since I came to this place, without some small improvement both in human knowledge, and that which is far better, and I earnestly desire the benefit of your prayers, that God would be pleased to fit me better for his service, both in this world and the next. This, if you please to afford me, and your advice with relation to study, or whatever else you think convenient, must needs be extremely useful, as well as agreeable, and shall be thankfully received by your most obliged, humble servant,

T. SECKER."

From these documents and observations, an idea sufficiently correct may be formed of the education of the second generation of dissenting ministers. Whatever part of the improvement of the student depended

on the talents and care of the tutor was not lost in the academies; their advantages in this respect were not inferior to the universities. Those tutors who became nonconformists, showed themselves to be men of conscience; and when they were placed at the head of dissenting seminaries, would be no less attentive to their charge than before, when within the walls of their college. Were we to suppose them to be under the influence of inferior considerations, whatever may be conceived to have been lost as to a spirit of emulation among the tutors there, would be more than compensated by zeal for the prosperity of the new communion; and in the academies, there was a sufficient number of students to kindle the desire of superior excellence, and excite a spirit to emulate such as were more conspicuous for learning. Other means of improvement which the universities afforded may not have been retained.

The funds, for the support of the dissenting academies during this period, were chiefly derived from the contributions of the parents and friends of the young men who received their education there. Some students were supported by the subscriptions of public spirited individuals, who were anxious for a succession of useful ministers in the dissenting congregations. These, however, were in comparison but few: the chief part defrayed the expences of their own instruction. It was from the middling class in society that the first race of dissenting students sprang, and most of them enjoyed the advantage of respectable as well as pious connexions.

A longer time was necessary to procure funds for the support of such students as were unable to provide

for themselves. This was a very serious loss, for there is always in the church as well as in civil society a class of young men who have talents and virtues, but not money; and who, on receiving an education for the ministry, rise in voluntary societies, where patronage is unknown, to the level of their abilities, hold the first place in the communities to which they belong, and are eminently useful in advancing the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom.

An attack on the dissenting seminaries was made by Samuel Wesley, father of the celebrated head of the arminian methodists. He had studied under Mr. Morton; and afterwards renouncing his dissent, sought his fortune in the arms of the establishment. To recommend himself more effectually to his new connexions, he published a violent Philippic against the non-conformist seminaries, charging the scholars with a defect of learning, of loyalty, of sanctity, and of respect for the church; and the tutors with a lack of integrity, for breaking the oath which they took at Oxford and Cambridge not to exercise the office in any other place: and their right to have academies for the instruction of their young people is boldly and flatly denied.

A defence of the academies was undertaken by Samuel Palmer, a minister in London, a person of Mr. Wesley's own standing. It is short, it denies the charges which were brought against them, and explains the mode of education there pursued. To this Mr. Wesley gave an answer supporting his accusation. In consequence of this, Mr. Palmer wrote "a Vindication of Dissenting Academies," and enlarges with ability and strenuousness in their favour, in order to

wipe off the foul stains which were thrown upon them. Mr. Wesley, determined to have the last word, published a reply to Mr. Palmer's Vindication. It is a quarto pamphlet containing one hundred and sixty pages closely printed. He goes over the same ground which he had trodden before. It contains a great deal of idle tittle-tattle and ridiculous nonsense. If any one ever read it to the end, he merits the character of a man of uncommon patience. It shows the writer to have been a hot, fierce, unreasonable, young man. The character given of him in his latter years affords reason to conclude, that he was changed infinitely for the better.

Mr. Palmer, conceiving himself to have merited great things from the dissenters for appearing in their defence, became dissatisfied with what he considered their neglect, and in the year one thousand seven hundred and ten, conformed, and had the living of Maldon given him. The restraints which he had found it necessary before to impose upon himself, he then threw aside, became openly vicious and immoral, and continued in this state till death called him to judgment.

Mr. Wesley's publications did no honour to the church; and Mr. Palmer's conduct, none either to the church, or the dissenters.

## CHAP. VI.

## OUTWARD STATE OF DISSENTERS DURING THIS PERIOD.

## SECTION I.

## NUMBER AND RANK OF THE DISSENTERS.

**T**O estimate with any degree of accuracy the number of persons who separated from the church of England when she published the stern decree of uniformity, was impossible even at the time ; because the persecution, which immediately took place, made people more desirous to conceal themselves from notice, than to come forward to be enrolled. We are much indebted to Dr. Calamy for his labour, in recovering and preserving a list, and in many instances giving biographical sketches of the ministers who were ejected for their nonconformity. They amounted to about two thousand ; and for learning, for soundness in the faith, for piety, for zeal, and for skill and gifts in preaching, the world, nay, the church of Christ has never seen such a body of confessors at any one time. To say that they far excelled any whom England can produce at the present day, in the learning of a divine, and the qualifications of a pastor, would not be paying them a compliment, the superiority was so great.

Twenty-six years had elapsed from the act of uniformity to the revolution ; and considering that the decay of life was hastened by their privations and their

sufferings, we may suppose, that one half of them, at least, had been removed by death, and not a few of their churches entirely scattered. But still it is probable, that the number of dissenters was greater after the revolution than before, that it continued to increase during the course of this period, and was larger when queen Anne died, than when king William ascended the throne.

A considerable change, however, gradually took place, both in the number and situations of the dissenting congregations. Many of the nonconformist ministers were ejected from country parishes. From the mutual attachment which existed between them and their people, and a sense of obligation to watch for their souls as there was no one else to do it, they continued to preach the gospel in their former fields of labour, and to retain the charge of those whom they had converted to the faith of Christ. In many instances some paternal property furnished their support; and where they had none, from the habits of self-denial which persecution had taught, the contributions of their hearers, and of benevolent individuals, at a distance, who felt for their distress, enabled them to live; and they closed their days in the village where they had spent the vigour of life, beloved and revered by their chosen flock. In some places the population did not furnish an adequate number of converts to supply the place of such as were removed by death; especially as in the years of persecution, it may naturally be supposed but few attended on their ministry, except such as felt the powers of the world to come. In consequence of this, the pastor and his flock grew old, declined, and died together: few, comparatively, were left behind.



In other places, the congregation did not diminish in numbers, but when the pastor died, they were unable from their circumstances to furnish support to a successor. While the more zealous of the old members lived, they continued to meet and to edify one another by reading the Scriptures and a sermon of some eminent divine, and by prayer and praise, and were sometimes favoured with the services of a neighbouring minister; but they afterwards melted into the general mass of the established church. Such as had opportunity, joined themselves to the congregations in the neighbouring towns; and many, for the sake of the gospel, quitted the place of their nativity, and went to reside where they could enjoy the ordinances of religion, according to their conscience and their taste. In numerous instances congregations were broken up for want of a minister in the room of the deceased, because the number of persons educated for the service was not sufficient to supply the deficiencies created by the ravages of death: of course the smaller congregations were left as sheep without a shepherd, and entirely dispersed.

The want of a place of worship was sometimes productive of the same effects. The small but devout assembly met in the habitation of the minister, or in the more commodious mansion of some distinguished and zealous member who joyfully received the ark of God. Some humble receptacle originally designed to contain the precious fruits of the earth, or for the purposes of trade, or manufacture, was often the hallowed temple of these persecuted saints, who there worshipped Jehovah in spirit and in truth. The decease of their pastor created grief like that which is felt for a first born or an only son. The

owner of their place of worship dies too ; they lose the opportunity of assembling there, for the heir is a man of a different spirit, and they are all scattered abroad. Many a cathedral has been shut up without heaven's sustaining so great a loss of intercourse, or God's being robbed of so large a treasure of homage and communion in the ordinances of public worship. In many hundreds of instances congregations were by these various means entirely dissipated.

But these deficiencies were supplied, and more than supplied in other ways. There were many towns from which no minister had been ejected, but most of these contained persons who preferred the government and worship of the nonconformist churches to those of the establishment, and their preaching to that of the clergy. As soon as they could find an opportunity and collect a sufficient number to form the nucleus of a congregation, they sought the occasional services of neighbouring ministers, and afterwards procured a pastor for themselves. Scores of dissenting churches, which became at length highly respectable both for piety and for numbers, were originally formed in this way.

During this period, in hundreds of congregations which had been already formed, there was a considerable increase, especially in country towns and villages. During the persecuting reigns of Charles and James, multitudes of people who preferred the ministry of the nonconformists did not possess the virtue nor the fortitude to bear "the world's loud laugh," and submit to the ridicule which a recent secession from an establishment never fails to draw down, especially when these were accompanied with the most serious injuries, imprisonment, and fines. But when the

glorious revolution made dissent no crime, and the broad shield of the law sheltered its adherents from suffering, people acted more according to their own inclination : and though still it was an unfashionable thing, and they must endure many a sneer, they considered these as not too great a price to pay for the superior benefits to be enjoyed from the ministry of those who had been confessors for the truth, and sufferers for conscience' sake. This was the case in the country towns and villages, more remarkably than in London, and other very populous cities.

The metropolis spreads a veil over its inhabitants. To their neighbours, if they choose, they are utterly unknown. Their acquaintances and friends are scattered wide, and as they have the opportunity of selecting them out of a considerable number, congeniality of sentiments is the more ordinary bond of union. Where a man worships God, and what is his creed, perhaps not an individual in the street where he resides can tell. He may therefore indulge his own pleasure, without feeling the faintest breath of the disapprobation of the neighbourhood, or hearing one reproachful word uttered against his sect.

But in the smaller country towns, and still more so in the villages, a man's neighbours are those with whom he is connected in acquaintance and friendship. Every thing relating to him and his family, his circumstances, his religious sentiments, and his conduct are perfectly known to the whole vicinity. By all in the place he is seen to turn his back on the church, and to go to worship in the conventicle. When in the times of suffering, it was a crime to attend there, the citizen of London might pass in the crowd unnoticed to the meeting-house, but the countryman

was unable to escape detection. In such circumstances to be a dissenter required greater fortitude and strength of soul than falls to the lot of every individual; for his reputation, his ease of mind in freedom from daily reproach, and his success in business are all concerned in the matter.

Afterwards, when toleration was given, the spirit of high church bigotry was still potent, and numbers in every place sorely grudged the liberty which had been granted, and endeavoured to render the exercise of it as unpleasant as they could; but these vexations though painful to the mind, were but puny in comparison of the former severities. Slighting, therefore, all other hindrances, considerable numbers of people, especially where the minister was an animated and acceptable preacher, became dissenters. This continued to be the case during the whole of the first period.

To be able to ascertain the number of dissenters with any precision, would be extremely gratifying on many accounts. But the opportunity was lost, and cannot be regained. One document, however, remains, and as it is the most specific, and gives the most particular and authentic information on the subject, its insertion will be agreeable to the reader. It is a list of the number of dissenting congregations in each county in England and Wales, which was drawn up in the years one thousand seven hundred and fifteen and one thousand seven hundred and sixteen, by Daniel Neal, the author of the History of the Puritans. The character of the man is a voucher for its accuracy: as it was done so soon after the death of queen Anne, the alterations during so short a space would be inconsiderable; and it may be looked upon as the most

faithful statement, which can now be given of the number of the dissenters at the close of the first period of their history.

“ Mr. Daniel Neal took an account of the several dissenting congregations in England and Wales, in the years one thousand seven hundred and fifteen and one thousand seven hundred and sixteen, of which this is a list.

The first column expresses the whole number, the second those of them which were baptists. The Welch are not distinguished.

Bedfordshire	23	22	Bro <sup>t</sup> . forw <sup>d</sup> .	628	149
Berkshire	26	10	Middlesex	91	26
Buckinghamsh.	17	7	Monmouthshire	8	2
Cambridgeshire	23	5	Norfolk	20	4
Cheshire	21	4	Northamptonsh.	40	22
Cornwal	12		Northumberland	27	
Cumberland	19	2	Nottinghamshire	8	1
Devonshire	61	6	Oxfordshire	14	3
Dorsetshire	35	5	Rutland	6	3
Durham	9		Shropshire	15	2
Derbyshire	28		Somersetshire	55	12
Essex	52	8	Suffolk	34	
Gloucester	51	16	Surry	20	4
Hampshire	32	9	Sussex	16	1
Herefordshire	8	1	Staffordshire	16	2
Hertfordshire	26	10	Warwickshire	18	4
Huntingdonsh.	31	1	Wiltshire	20	4
Kent	52	27	Worcestershire	18	8
Lancashire	47	4	Westmoreland	5	
Leicestershire	33	9	Yorkshire	48	
Lincolnshire	22	3			
Carr. forw <sup>d</sup> .			628	149	
			Total	1107	247

NORTH WALES.		SOUTH WALES.	
Anglesey	1	Brecknock	3
Carnarvonshire	1	Cardigan	3
Denbigh	3	Carmarthen	9
Merioneth	1	Glamorgan	7
Montgomery	2	Pembroke	8
Flint	1	Radnorshire	4
		Total	43

In estimating the relative numbers of the different denominations, the presbyterians could still boast of a very large majority. In the assembly of divines at Westminster, while there were scores of presbyterians, but five independents were to be found. Since that time they had very considerably increased; but still they were far inferior to the presbyterians in number. The baptists were the smallest body of the three, but in a state of gradual increase. Had D. Neal in his list specified the number of congregations in each of the two denominations of pædobaptists, it would have enabled us more accurately to decide the question. But from other sources it appears that both the number and size of the presbyterian congregations were nearly double to that of the independents. And though the congregations of the baptists were nearly equal to the independents in number, they were inferior to them in size. The superiority of the presbyterians is evident from the arrangements in the meetings of the deputies of the three denominations for business. For one independent, and one baptist, there were always to be two presbyterians; and some marks of such regulations remain to the present day.

So far as titles and worldly honours give dignity or

respectability to the church of Christ, the dissenters were at their acmé in the earlier part of this period, or perhaps before its commencement. When the act of uniformity brought down on England one of the greatest curses which it ever felt, some of the nobility adhered to the ejected ministers, and many of the gentry; and continued to attend on their ministry as long as they lived. Vincent Alsop, an eminent non-conformist minister, whose meeting-house was in Westminster, had some of the nobles of the land among his auditors. Not a few persons of figure attended on the ministry of Mr. Howe, at Silver-street, in the city. But the chief part of the dissenters in cities and towns consisted of merchants, manufacturers, tradesmen, and mechanics. Farmers and their servants composed the most considerable portion of the congregation in villages and hamlets, with here and there a country squire.

But the non-conforming nobility and gentry scarcely outlived the days of the ejected ministers. The patrons of these good men were the grave, old nobility, who had been trained up in the sober days of the suspension of monarchy, when there was also a suspension of all those vanities and amusements, of that parade and ostentation, "of the lust of the eye and the pride of life," which are so fatally destructive to the souls of the people in the great world. Their principles were then established, their characters formed, and they were not ashamed to adhere to those despised men whose worth they knew, whose doctrine they approved, and whose ministry had been blessed to their conversion and growth in grace. This sufficiently accounts for their continuance with them to the end of life.

The inauspicious reign of Charles the second, an

unprincipled debauchee, proved a greater curse to none than to the English nobility. Every thing serious was turned into ridicule, and unfeigned piety of heart and sanctity of life were defamed under the name of fanaticism, enthusiasm, hypocrisy, and folly. To the rising race, education under such impressions was ruin<sup>c</sup>. From that time, the nobles of England lost the sober, serious, and dignified deportment which numbers of them sustained in the former reigns from the æra of the reformation. Let any one read the numerous books of the ancient puritans, when treating on the most evangelical subjects, and in the most experimental strain, and then let them read the dedications to the nobility of their day; and the conclusion must be, that they were not only unfeignedly pious, but also intimately acquainted with the doctrines of the Gospel. But Charles the second was a curse to those who inherited the honours of their house. Some embraced infidelity; many became ashamed of religion; and still more forsook its ordinances of worship; and with some splendid exceptions, this has continued to be too much the case to the present day. Let it be remembered that this is one of the causes why the privileged order has lost much of that homage and weight in the community, which they possessed when they were not only superior to others in wealth and worldly honours, but patterns of piety and benevolence: and when, instead of spending their princely revenues in luxury and excess, in trifling amusements, in gaming, and in the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, they exercised the old English hospitality, were the fathers and mothers of all the poor families near their mansions, were sur-

<sup>c</sup> Burnet's History of his Own Times.



rounded by a tenantry who looked up to them with veneration, discountenanced vice by their frowns, and gave energy to virtue and goodness by their example. May such times soon return and bless the British isle ! When so mournful a change took place, it is not to be wondered at, if all the rising race forsook the dissenters, and betook themselves to the temples of a more fashionable faith, or what was as common, lived without any profession of religion. The loss of such men by the dissenters was to their praise.

## SECTION II.

## LABOURS OF MINISTERS, AND THEIR SUPPORT.

**T**HE particular nature and quantity of pastoral labour performed by the dissenting ministers during this period, will be a general subject of inquiry, especially among their successors in office, and it may justly be considered as a subject of some importance.

To the great Lord and Giver of Life, all are accountable for the use of their talents. On those who sustain an important station in society, there lies a peculiar obligation to improve them to the utmost. And if there be one class of men on whom above all others the obligation rests, it is on ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But while the greatest diligence is employed, it may, at different seasons, be directed in different ways. Sometimes it has been chiefly occupied in active labours, by preaching the Gospel, and conducting the various exercises of religion. At other times, the study has been the scene of a larger proportion of exertion than the pulpit. From a peculiarity of circumstances there may be seasons when both these modes of conduct may be highly proper. But in the ordinary course of things it is well when these two are fitly apportioned, so that each has its due measure of time and of application: the great ends of the Christian ministry will then be most effectually attained.

From the records which remain of the labours of

the ministers, especially in the country, their diligence both in study and in public services is entitled to the highest commendation. They had two seasons for public worship on the Lord's-day, the morning and afternoon, but their services were longer than ours. The following account of the method of conducting public worship by Mr. M. Henry, at Chester, and afterwards at Hackney, may be considered as affording a specimen of what was practised by the presbyterians of that generation.

“ His constant work on the Lord's-days at Chester was to pray six times in public, to sing six times, to expound twice, and preach twice. His method was, after having worshipped God in his family, in the manner that has been already mentioned, he went to the congregation exactly at nine of the clock, began the public worship with singing the hundredth psalm, then prayed a short but fervent and suitable prayer, then he read some part of the Old Testament, and expounded it, going through it in course from the beginning to the end, then he sang another psalm, then he prayed for about half an hour, then he preached about an hour, then prayed and sang usually the hundred and seventeenth psalm, and then gave the blessing. He did the same exactly in the afternoon, only then expounded out of the New Testament, and sang at the end the hundred and thirty-fourth psalm, or some verses of the hundred and thirty-sixth. This was his constant Lord's-days work<sup>d</sup>. ”

Evening lectures were then almost unknown, but the manner in which the close of the Sabbath was spent in the houses of the dissenters cannot be spoken of with too exalted praise. After retirement for the

<sup>d</sup> M. Henry's Life, p. 157, 158.

secret exercises of devotion in reading, meditation, and prayer, the family was called together, the children and servants were catechised and examined as to the discourses which they had heard, a sermon of some good old puritan or non-conformist was read, and psalms were sung, and the day concluded with fervent and solemn prayer. In most congregations, there were some in whose houses a few of their neighbours assembled, and the sermons which had been delivered in public, were repeated from notes which had been taken down, or from a faithful memory; and acts of worship in prayer and praise were united with the exercise. This was not unfrequently done by the minister himself to such of his people as found it convenient to meet together at his house.

Weekly lectures were in common use; and some of the country ministers maintained stated exercises of worship in the villages around them. Monthly services were supported in places more remote. M. Henry used to make a circuit every year through an extensive range of the surrounding country, and preach daily in the meeting-houses of the neighbouring ministers, and in the habitations of his friends. He afterwards added a second and more extensive itinerancy<sup>c</sup>.

Congregational fasts were frequently observed by the most zealous ministers and churches during this period. These exercises were common during the civil wars, and strictly observed generally every month by those on the parliament's side. The service began at nine in the morning, and continued without intermission till four in the afternoon. Seven hours did the lords and commons of those days spend in prayer and singing psalms, and in hearing the word

<sup>c</sup> Henry's Life, p. 252, 268.

of God read and preached. Some, who now occupy their seats in St. Stephen's chapel, will smile at the taste of their predecessors; some will be filled with horror at the sound, and others will exclaim that they were intoxicated with fanaticism, and enthusiasm. But Christ was neither a fanatic nor an enthusiast, because he spent whole nights in prayer to God. Brevity of devotions is no proof of their being either rational or sincere: in many instances it may be an evidence that the person feels no delight in the employment. These days of fasting continued though perhaps less frequently till the restoration, when profaneness and debauchery pushed them out and occupied their place. The non-conformists continued to observe them, and they were well suited to their afflicted and persecuted state. They continued in use among the dissenting congregations at this time. Mr. Henry and his flock observed them four times a year<sup>f</sup>.

In these various exercises, great pains were taken to prepare for the pulpit; and what was delivered there from week to week, was, in respect to accuracy at least, ordinarily fit for the press. Indeed many of the publications of this period were collections of their ordinary discourses to the people, and bear unquestionable marks of the laborious industry of the authors in the composition of their weekly sermons. Much of their time must consequently have been spent in their study in order to prepare two discourses carefully composed and written for each returning Sabbath, besides the frequent sermons on other days.

The man, who would make the sentiments and taste of his own age a rule for every other, and would praise

<sup>f</sup> Henry's Life, p. 217.

or condemn according to that standard, betrays a defect of that comprehension of mind which is necessary to a fair comparison of different periods. No portion of time is to be considered as absolutely insulated, but is closely connected with that which precedes. There are indeed extraordinary epochs, which with rude violence tear off from the minds of men the sentiments and habits of the foregoing age, and produce a change which astonishes the world. Such was the conversion of the Jews and Heathens to the Christian faith; and such was the age of the reformation from popery. But in the ordinary current of human affairs, the operations of the mind are gradual, and the alteration of sentiments, tastes, and habits is by little and little.

If we look to the period before the revolution, we shall perceive that this practice of the dissenters was derived from the non-conformists, and theirs again from the puritans. That it was almost the universal custom of the church divines of another class may be naturally supposed. On examining the works of the puritans, it will be found, that, with the exception of their controversial pieces, they consist chiefly of their sermons either exhibited in their original form, or else wrought into the shape of a treatise on a particular subject.

Nearly the same judgment may be formed of the greater number of the expanded volumes of the non-conformists. After the act of uniformity had excluded them from the pulpit, and interrupted their public labours, some of them, happily for the Christian church, and the cause of the Redeemer, employed their unwelcome leisure in composing treatises on a variety of theological subjects, doctrinal, experimental, and practical. In this number may be ranked

Baxter, Bates, Howe, and above all the rest, Owen. But still the largest portion of their publications consists of the matter of their weekly sermons, either in their first shape with all their heads and subdivisions, or as a treatise with its numerous chapters, and sections,

Of sermons alone consisted the principal works of others of no mean celebrity. Manton, Charnock, Flavel, and Clarkson are on this list. The five huge folios with many smaller ones of the first, the two bulky volumes of the second, two well sized folios of the third, and the large volume of the last have handed down to the present age their ordinary weekly discourses, and shew us what was the daily bread with which their congregations were fed. While the vast treasure of evangelical truth which they contain, and the rich display of genius, learning, extent of view, depth of thought, sagacity of judgment, and ardour of piety must astonish and delight those who are familiarly acquainted with their writings, (and the remark may be extended to many of their brethren) all will unite in expressing their wonder at that patience of labour, and perseverance of application which are stamped so deeply on all their works.

By a competent judge too, it will be easily seen that composition formed but an inferior portion of their toil. From the richness and fulness of their sermons, from the extent of knowledge, and the copiousness of allusion and reference with which they every where abound, it will be evident that a considerable part of their time must have been occupied in the attentive and vigorous perusal of the works of the most eminent men in every age who had written on subjects immediately, or even remotely connected with theological science.

The successors of the non-conformists would naturally be led to follow their example; and as the first dissenting ministers were their hearers, their assistants and co-pastors, it may readily be conceived that they would copy the manner of men whom they so much esteemed, admired, and loved. One of the most obvious parts of imitation was the careful preparation of their discourses for the pulpit. It was indeed a necessary measure, for the people had been accustomed to well studied and elaborate discourses from the ablest preachers of the former generation, and it is but justice to say, that they had profited by them. Indeed if the general character of those who composed the churches be estimated with impartiality and candour, it is not exalting them beyond the truth to say, that within the pale of the Christian church, the finger of man could not point at any age, or country, or denomination in which there was, in proportion to the whole, such a number of eminent and judicious believers, and so large a measure of divine knowledge and devotedness to God. Nor should this appear strange, for they were a body of confessors who, having enjoyed the instructions of the ablest ministers, separated themselves from the world, and submitted to its contempt, its derision, and its injuries for the sake of Christ.

The looser preaching, therefore, which might best suit a congregation just called out of ignorance, and beginning to learn what are the first principles of the oracles of God, would not have been either agreeable or proper for these societies, which were skilful in the word of righteousness. And on a due consideration of all the circumstances, we may be led to see that it was necessary for them to study their discourses with greater care than may be requisite in a multitude of



places at the present time ; and that in doing so, they did not err from the path of duty, but observed that method which was most conducive to the edification of their hearers.

Such was the mode of preaching in general use among the presbyterians, and the more learned of the independents and baptists. Among some of the presbyterians, many of the independents, and still more of the baptists, a less elaborate way of preaching prevailed.

Their discourses the dissenters in general delivered without notes. There were many among the non-conformists, who used them for occasional reference, and there were some few who read their sermons. This is said to have been Charnock's practice ; and the shortness of his sight rendering a glass necessary, lessened the popularity of his elocution. But still by far the greater part preached without book, and made themselves so far masters of their notes as to render reading unnecessary. This formed a line of distinction between the dissenters and the clergy of the establishment, among whom reading discourses was now become general.

The Lord's supper was usually dispensed by them every month. The more private duties of the ministerial office, such as pastoral visits to the flock, and especially to the afflicted, received a due measure of attention. The instruction of the young in the principles of religion was considered as an important branch of ministerial duty. Mr. Doolittle, Mr. Henry, and others had public stated exercises for this purpose, and extended their labours so far as to convey to their catechumens very considerable measures of theological truth.

The separation of the non-conformists from the establishment, and the formation of distinct congregations, called for the performance of a new duty. The law of tithes had before rendered unnecessary the collection of money from the mass of the community. But the benefit of these ceased as to such as had gone without the pale of the church : and the support of dissenting ministers rested intirely on the contributions of the people, and continues to do so to the present day.

That a man who devotes all his time and all his talents to the spiritual instruction of a Christian society, should receive from them a remuneration sufficient for the maintenance of himself and his family, is one of those axioms in the system of moral obligation, the truth of which is perceived as soon as it is expressed. It is the way in which Christ made provision for the ministers of his Gospel : and in proportion to the influence of the principles of the Gospel on the heart, will the measure of this provision always be.

This regulation of the supreme Head of the church, human wisdom could never improve : but it could alter, and by the alteration a flood of evils has poured in upon the Christian church, so as to overflow the beautiful and fertile field and leave it intirely covered with sand and weeds. Had Christ's original rule been every where observed, ecclesiastical history would not have had the disgusting office to record ages of ignorance and superstition ; for they were produced by pampered priests, so fattened by the provision which Christ never made for them, as to be rendered lazy and unable to work. Nor would it have been necessary to enumerate a multitude of bloody persecutions, for which religion was employed

as the pretext, but the fear of losing the loaves and the fishes was the cause. Had an indolent and careless clergy never had any thing to depend on but that which was the inheritance of the primitive pastors, namely, the oblations of the faithful, they would soon have been starved out of the priesthood, and obliged to retire to their proper sphere of action. Some secular employment would have furnished them with a morsel of bread ; and men better qualified, and possessing the true spirit of the pastoral office would have worthily filled their place.

It may probably be objected, that if there was no other method of provision than this, in thousands of places in this country the people must be destitute of religious instruction, because in many places they could not, and in others they would not support a minister. This will be readily allowed ; but what is the cause ? There was a departure from the institutions of Christ ; and where his institutions have been departed from, in a course of time things may be so deranged as to produce the most melancholy effects, and to render the restoration of the original rule a matter of immense difficulty. Neglect to teach a person in childhood and youth the elements of language and of science, and the principles of religion, and let him remain untutored till forty years of age. You then begin too late. He is disinclined to learn. He is almost unable. The uncultivated mind cannot endure the tediousness of confinement and the severities of application. If he had been taken at the proper time, all would have been easy and well ; but inattention to his early education has proved his ruin. Had Christianity been always propagated in the legitimate way, the people would have felt themselves bound

by the adamant chains of duty to support their spiritual instructor: and in a country like England, such arrangements could have been made, as in the poorest places to have provided support for a minister. In some few situations, where the people might be unable of themselves, assistance from more opulent and generous Christians in towns and cities would have been sufficient to supply deficiencies. But where human institutions have made void the ordinances of Christ, and have introduced a state of things directly opposite, the extreme difficulty of returning to the original condition and frame of the Christian church is frankly acknowledged, while it is deeply deplored.

An important service is rendered to Christians when they are called to support their own ministers. They are taught to cherish, to exercise, and to cultivate the principles of Christian justice, and benevolence. The habit of giving of their substance for the advancement of religion is confirmed and strengthened by practice; and piety to God, and affection for mankind are augmented by every act of beneficence which they perform. To take this office out of their hands, and put it into those of the government, is doing a very serious injury; it is making men children, and depriving them of an honour to which they are entitled.

The support of the dissenting ministers was in the primitive mode. They depended on the contributions of their congregation. That in this way there was but little stimulus to ambition, and a feeble lure to avarice may be readily supposed. But to humble and contented minds, which were chiefly intent on promoting the grand ends of the Christian ministry, it

furnished what was necessary, and satisfied their desires. It was an age of simplicity and economy. The immense taxes under the load of which the country now labours, and which have so prodigiously enhanced the price of every article of subsistence, were then unknown. On a very small salary a family frugal in its habits, could then live with decency and comfort. With the exception of some villages and small towns where the hearers were but few or poor, what was necessary for the support of the minister was collected among his own people, and in many places it was a decent competence. Praise is due to the benevolence of the more opulent Christians in London, who, by an annual collection, raised a fund to assist the poorer congregations in the country, in giving their ministers a necessary support.

To compare the situation of the worst provided of the dissenting ministers with that of curates in the established church, would be to do the former an injury. In the instances, where the sums given were equal, the kindness of the congregation, their cordial friendship for their minister, the lively interest they take in every thing pertaining to him, and to his family, and their readiness to contribute to his relief in seasons of extraordinary necessity or distress have nothing corresponding in the curate's scanty allowance from his rector, and in the cold unconcern of the parish, which thinks it pays money enough to the beneficed incumbent, without being under the necessity of troubling itself to give assistance to his helper.

In the earlier part of the existence of the baptist churches in England; many, or perhaps most of the ministers, especially among the particular baptists, were illiterate men, and followed some branch of busi-

ness. In many places this was absolutely necessary, because the people were poor, and utterly unable to furnish a support, so that they could not have enjoyed the ordinances of religion in their own communion, unless they had received them free from cost. Such therefore as would minister to them on these terms, they found it necessary to accept.

It was likewise a common opinion among them, that ministers ought not to receive any remuneration from their people for their labours. In defence of it, they quoted a passage in the prophet Micah iii. 11. "The priests teach for hire, and the prophets divine for money." The pride and luxury of the clergy, and their severity in the collection of the tithes of which they were wont loudly to complain, confirmed them in their ideas, which were no doubt still further strengthened by the unseen and unfelt influence of a penurious spirit. Sentiments which spare a man's purse, are in general welcome to the heart.

In London, the baptists were early sensible, that by enabling the ministers to devote themselves entirely to the duties of the pastoral office, the people would reap the greater benefit from it; and they provided them with what was necessary for their support. Anxious to diffuse the same spirit in the country, they employed, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight, Benjamin Keach, pastor of a church in Horsleydown, who was greatly respected by the body, to draw up a pamphlet on the subject. He complied, and by arguments drawn from positive institution under the Gospel, from the care taken of the ministers of religion under the law, and from the light of nature, he proves it to be the duty of every congregation (if capable of it), to support their minister.

He points out the inconveniences and injury which would result from the neglect, obviates the objections which are usually adduced, and resolves the cases which they were accustomed to bring forward<sup>§</sup>.

That the work might have the more extensive circulation and influence, it was recommended by the most eminent ministers in London. The following year, when the representatives of more than a hundred particular baptists assembled in the metropolis, the subject was brought before them, and Mr. Keach's pamphlet sanctioned by their approbation, and recommended to the perusal of their respective congregations. In addition to this, they wrote a circular epistle to the churches which they represented, "in which (to use the words of their historian) they said they held this as a great evil and neglect of duty in churches, that they did not make due provision for the maintenance of their ministers according to their ability; by which means those ministers so unprovided for, were encumbered with worldly cares, which rendered them incapable of performing the duties of their holy calling, in preaching the word, and walking with their flock, as they ought to do<sup>h</sup>." In order to carry their object more effectually into execution, the assembly resolved to establish a public fund, from which assistance might be given to congregations that were poor.

When two thousand ministers were shut out of their places of worship, to find new ones was by no means a task of the easiest kind. During the iron age of persecution, while the rod of the wicked lay

<sup>§</sup> Keach's Minister's Maintenance vindicated. Crosby's Hist. vol. IV. p. 294.

<sup>h</sup> Crosby's Hist. vol. IV. p. 297,

upon the lot of the righteous, when to be found in a conventicle was a crime, a meeting-house was so precarious a kind of property, and so dangerous to its possessor, that there was but little encouragement to erect such a building. A large room, a hall, a barn, a warehouse, places of temporary accommodation were sought and occupied, and longing wishes expressed for better days, when they might provide more appropriate and commodious structures for public worship. Yet during these years of trial, meeting-houses were erected, both in London and in the country, in greater number than there was any reason to expect. But these were the days of the energy of religion: its potent influence on the soul communicated a heroism, a daring intrepidity which despised dangers, and hazarded the loss of all for the sake of Christ.

Those happier days of peace after which the dissenters sighed, the revolution gave them: and every congregation sought to provide itself with a place of worship as decent and commodious as its circumstances could afford. That beneficial communion of churches, by which hundreds assist one, and exertions impossible to the individual congregation are successfully made by many, was then scarcely begun to be formed: it was the work of a future age. When this circumstance is considered, we may justly wonder that the places of public worship built during this period were so substantial and convenient. To compare them to ordinary village churches would not be to their honour. Humble as some of them were, no one would find in them that damp and filth which would lead persons to judge that they were temples consecrated to some impure spirit, who delighted to dwell in sub-



terreanous vaults, and not places of worship for a Christian assembly. As all were in a similar situation, there must have been a general exertion among the body of dissenters in all parts of the kingdom, and an extraordinary exercise of Christian benevolence. This energy, while it indicates the power of good principles in the soul, must at the same time have been productive of the best effects; for where there is a generous display of liberality in consequence of a manifest call of duty, it leaves the happiest impression on the mind of the donor, and prepares him for the performance of other good works of charity and mercy.

Where the congregations were small, and the increase gradual, their old conventicle served them for years after the revolution; but at last it could not contain the numbers which attended, and a new place of worship became necessary, and was built. This was the case in hundreds of instances during the reigns of William and Anne. So that this period may not improperly be called "The age of building meeting-houses." The name of chapels had not then been borrowed from the establishment<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Some of the title deeds of the old presbyterian meeting-houses shew, that the people had in their minds the idea of a comprehension, and make provision for the disposal of the premises in case such an event should take place. The relief, granted at the revolution, and the promises of the clergy, filled them with the expectation of such an event. But the majority, both in church and state, were of a different mind. Had it not been for William's influence, toleration would not have been given; and but for the influence of the house of Hanover, it would not have been preserved.

## SECTION III.

## PUBLIC SERVICES, AND ASSOCIATIONS OF DISSENTERS.

**I**N enumerating these, we begin with ordination to the pastoral office, which has ever been considered as an important service. The gorgeous ceremonies appended to it by the church of Rome, as well as the power pretended to be conveyed, have always been looked upon by protestants as unsuitable to the simplicity and spirit of the Gospel. Some things in the ritual of the Church of England for ordaining priests and deacons, were objected to by the nonconformists as improper and unscriptural. They may therefore be supposed to have observed a different mode. What it was, will appear from the following instances.

Among the presbyterians during this period, it was common to ordain several candidates for the ministry at the same time ; and consequently not in the place where they were to minister, nor in the presence of those of whom they were entrusted with the charge. The origin of this practice may be traced perhaps to the earlier days of the English episcopacy. Among the Scotch presbyterians it had no place : the form of their ordination requires that it should be in the presence of the flock. When the episcopal church was pushed down from its dominion, the English presbyterians retained the practice of ordaining several at a time, while the people were at a distance, only with the

difference of presbyterian instead of episcopalian forms. The continuance of the practice after the restoration, might be further accounted for from the desire of secrecy, because there would be less frequent occasion for assembling to do that which exposed them all to danger.

From the act of uniformity, to the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-four, it is not known that there was a public ordination among the dissenters in England. Whenever the service was to be performed, the veil of secrecy was thrown over it, a place of retirement was sought, and none were suffered to be present but the persons ordaining, and the persons ordained: and the testimonials given, were sometimes (as in Mr. Henry's case) in terms so obscure, as to make it evident that there existed in their minds the fear of punishment for what they had done<sup>k</sup>. Though by the glorious revolution the ordination of dissenting ministers became a lawful act, it was some time before they ventured on the performance of it in public. Those who have lived from their infancy under a system of liberty, and whose souls feel all the sentiments which the laws contain, are not sufficiently aware, that with the generation by which this system was first obtained, some time must elapse before their minds can imbibe its liberal principles, and they dare do all that the laws warrant to be done, and they feel themselves able to walk at their ease, and free from dread, beyond the limits of their former narrow path, in the more extensive range that has been assigned them. The progress is gradual: they venture trembling from step to step till they have taken possession of the whole, and

<sup>k</sup> Henry's Life, p. 90, 91.

with confidence of mind consider it as their own. Perhaps too we scarcely make sufficient allowance for the spirit of the times. Extraordinary services among the dissenters were regarded with peculiar jealousy: and it was alledged as a heavy charge against them, and loudly complained of by their enemies, that fifty young persons had been ordained to the ministry among them, in a year or two after the revolution.

Within six years after the revolution, the dissenters had so far advanced in the enjoyment of their privileges, that secret ordinations would no longer satisfy them. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Edmund Calamy, and six other young ministers, wishing to be ordained, were desirous that the service might be performed before the face of a congregation. Mr. Howe, who was requested to preach the sermon, declined engaging from a fear of giving offence to government. Dr. Bates, from some peculiar reasons that weighed in his mind, which though he disclosed to Mr. Calamy, he desired might not be revealed to any, could not be prevailed on to take part in the work. But the following ministers, Dr. Annesly, Mr. Alsop, Mr. Sylvester, Mr. Stretton, Dr. Williams, and Mr. Kentish being less scrupulous and more determined, engaged in the service. The persons ordained were Joseph Bennett, Thomas Reynolds, Edmund Calamy, Joseph Hill, William King, Ebenezer Bradshaw, and Joshua Bayes. The place was Dr. Annesly's meeting-house, in Little St. Helens, Bishopgate-street.

The following account is given by one of the persons who was ordained.

“ The manner of that day's proceeding was this. Dr. Annesly began with prayer: then Mr. Alsop

preached from 1 Pet. v. 1, 2, 3 : then Mr. Williams prayed, and made a discourse concerning the nature of ordination : then he mentioned the names of the persons that were to be ordained ; read their several testimonials, that were signed by such ministers as were well acquainted with them ; and took notice what places they were severally employed in as preachers : then he called for Mr. Bennett's confession of faith, put the usual questions to him out of the directory of the Westminster assembly, and prayed over his head : then Mr. Thomas Kentish did the same by Mr. Reynolds ; Dr. Annesly did the like by me ; Mr. Alsop by Mr. Hill and Mr. King ; Mr. Stretton by Mr. Bradshaw ; and Mr. Williams again by Mr. Bayes : and after all, Mr. Sylvester concluded with a solemn charge, a psalm, and a prayer. The whole took up all the day, from before ten to past six.

“ Before our being thus ordained, we were strictly examined, both in philosophy and divinity, and made and defended a thesis each of us, upon a theological question, being warmly opposed by the several ministers present.”

From Mr. M. Henry's diary it appears that a similar method of ordination was observed among the dissenters in Cheshire, and the neighbouring counties<sup>1</sup>. Sometimes five or six, and on one occasion, eight candidates for the ministry were ordained at once, some of them to churches near a hundred miles distant. From this practice, it would appear that the presbyterians had not shaken off all the old episcopalian ideas which they had originally imbibed. The loose connexion between ministers and people in the church of England may be here discerned, as well as the want

<sup>1</sup> Henry's Life, p. 260, 261.

of that respect which is due in an affair in which the congregation is so nearly concerned. The ministers in this method of ordination do every thing, the people nothing; and their part in the solemn transaction seems to have been entirely omitted. It should however be mentioned, that some of the candidates at this time had an idea of being ordained ministers of Christ in general, and not pastors of a particular church. By degrees they learned to ordain the minister always in the face of his congregation; and the setting apart of more than one at a time, except in extraordinary cases was laid aside.

From the beginning, the independents had more just ideas of the people, than either the presbyterians or episcopalians. Their system has in it a greater measure of popular influence; and they were farther removed from all episcopalian practices than the presbyterians. Their ordinations were always in the face of the church, and the people bore that share in the transaction that the important relation into which they were entering necessarily required. In a case of dire necessity, a man may be married by proxy; but it is an awkward way: it is far more rational and proper to have his bride standing by his side. The services of the ministers on the occasion were nearly the same as among their presbyterian brethren. By some of the independents, the imposition of hands was objected to, as a practice which ought to have been laid aside as soon as the power of conferring extraordinary gifts had ceased. There were among the independents in this period, some churches which performed the work of ordination among themselves, and invited the neighbouring ministers only to be spectators of the act, and witnesses of their faith

and order, without taking any part in the service. But the practice gradually fell into disuse".

The method of ordination among the baptists, bore a near resemblance to that of the independents. A particular account of the manner in which Mr. Burroughs was ordained to the pastoral office in the church in Barbican, London, is given by their historian Mr. Crosby : and though it did not take place till more than a year after the conclusion of this period, it was, as he informs us, the mode which they had been accustomed to observe ; and it may be considered as

" The following is an extract from the records of the church at Wellingborough, and presents an ordination of this kind. " The third of September, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one, we held a church meeting with fasting and prayer, for the choosing of elders and setting them apart. We chose brother John Osborn to the office of rule with brother Henseman. When we had chosen them by the lifting up of the hands of the church, and the testification of their desires, then we ordained them. Brother Henseman and brother Osborn solemnly covenanted with the people in the presence of the Lord, to be faithful to the charges committed to them. The church also covenanted to carry it towards them as becoming people to their officers.

" We chose brother Robert Bettson to be our pastor ; this was also with the joint consent of the church. The brethren testified their choice by word ; and afterwards the whole church, brethren and sisters testified their choice by standing up and lifting up their hands to the Lord. We sent for brother Bettson in, and acquainted him with the church's choice, which the Lord helped him to accept. Then we proceeded to ordain brother Bettson, in which our elders, brother Henseman and brother Osborn laid their hands on brother Bettson, and prayed setting him before the Lord, testifying to the Lord, that that was the man they had chosen to the office of a pastor. And after prayer laid their hands on him again, and declared to the people that he was their pastor. And the ruling elders gave him authority, entering into covenant with him as to write them in those transactions. There were several pastors of other churches by, as Mr. Davis, Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Beds, besides brothers of other churches."

a specimen of that which prevailed among those who were accounted the more learned and regular of that denomination.

“The church sent messengers to those ministers whom they particularly desired to take a part in the service, and gave a general invitation to others to honour them with their presence on the occasion. Mr. Foxwell began the service by reading the Scriptures, 1 Tim. iii. and iv. and prayer for the church, for its officers, for the presence of God, and for the aid of his grace. Mr. B. Stinton preached from Phil. i. 1. and explained the office of an elder, and of deacons. He was followed by Mr. Nathaniel Hodges, who, in a discourse from Tit. i. 5. explained and vindicated their form of ordination. After this Mr. Stinton, addressing himself to the members of the church who were collected into one place, desired them to express their approbation and confirmation of the choice which they had made of Mr. Burroughs to be their pastor. This was unanimously done by holding up their hands. He then turned to Mr. Burroughs and said, “as this church has chosen you to be their pastor, signify to us whether you accept of their call, and are willing for the sake of Christ, and the good of this community to be put into this office.” Mr. Burroughs signified his acceptance, and declared that he was determined to make the Holy Scriptures his only rule and standard. After a short prayer suitable to the occasion, the ministers present laid their right hands on Mr. Burrough’s head, and Mr. Stinton, in the name of the whole, pronounced the following words, “Brother Joseph Burroughs, we do, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with the consent of this church, ordain thee to be an elder, bishop, or overseer



of this church of Jesus Christ." And their hands continuing on his head, Mr. Stinton put up a short prayer to God for him and the congregation. Two deacons were then ordained in a similar manner, and with the same rites. Mr. Mulliner, after praying over them, went up into the pulpit, and preached a very excellent discourse from 1 Thess. v. 12, 13, on the duties of a Christian church towards their officers, both pastors and deacons, after which he prayed. A psalm of thanksgiving was then sung, and the assembly was dismissed with one of the apostolic benedictions<sup>a</sup>."

Some of the baptists, he tells us, objected to this form, and thought that the ministers who practised it, in setting a person apart to the work of the ministry, assumed greater power and authority than became them; and they thought the apostles themselves would not have used these words, "we ordain thee." By them therefore the words were omitted; and when they laid their hands on his head, they only prayed for a blessing on the pastor elect. This they conceived to be sufficient, and that they went as far as they knew that the apostles did, who laid their hands on the persons whom they ordained, and prayed to God in their behalf.

In this denomination too there were some who had the strongest aversion to the imposition of hands in ordination, because they conceived that it savoured too much of priestly pretensions to the communication of authority and extraordinary gifts. When therefore they were called to perform the service, they set the person apart by solemn prayer, but without laying their hands upon his head.

<sup>a</sup> Crosby's History of Bapt. vol. IV. p. 180—189.

While some of the baptist body were averse to the imposition of hands on ministers, many of them extended the rite to every member who was received into the communion of the church. Edward Barber, who from being a clergyman in the old church of England before the civil wars, became pastor of a baptist church in Bishopgate-street, is said to have been the first who practised the laying on of hands on his converts, when after their immersion he was receiving them into communion with his society. He died before the restoration<sup>o</sup>.

In a confession of faith, published by the arminian baptists, it is declared to be "the duty of all baptized believers and necessary to a right constituted church<sup>p</sup>." Among them it was at first generally practised, but afterwards gradually fell into disuse. Some however retained it till near the middle of the eighteenth century.

By the calvinistic baptists the propriety of the rite was discussed, but there was a diversity of sentiments among them on the subject. In some of their churches it had no place; others regarded it as a matter of indifference, and used or omitted it according to the wish of particular members. Some went so far as to make it a necessary condition of entrance into their communion. In the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-two, a dispute of some

<sup>o</sup> Crosby, vol. III. p. 3.

<sup>p</sup> "It is the duty of all such who are believers baptized to draw nigh unto God in submission to that principle of Christ's doctrine, to wit, prayer and the laying on of hands, that they may receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, whereby they may mortify the deeds of the body, and live in all things answerable to their professed institutions and desires, even to the honour of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light." Crosby, vol. IV. p. 391, 392.

eagerness took place among the ministers, and books were written on the subject. Among others, Mr. Danvers, pastor of a church in London, wrote with zeal against the rite, and was answered by Mr. Keach, whose church "made it a boundary of their communion, and would receive none into their society but by this method; and they have been tenacious of this principle even to this day."

How ridiculous do such whims and fancies render a religious society. There is a littleness in these things which makes it impossible for a Christian of liberal sentiments to view them but with contempt. They harden an infidel in his rejection of the Gospel. "Can that system," they say, "be divine which lays a stress on trifles?"

Numerous public meetings were, during this period, instituted among the dissenters. Association is an important principle of the Christian religion, and enters into its very essence. When the Gospel calls a man to attend on public worship, and to become a member of a church, it inculcates in the most power-

<sup>1</sup> Crosby, vol. IV. p. 290. He published his history in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty.

<sup>2</sup> Laying on of hands seems to have been the fashion of that day, and by it wonders were supposed to have been done. In the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-six sir William Perkins, and sir John Friend being led forth to execution, for their concern in the plot to assassinate the king, Mr. Jeremy Collier, Mr. Cook, and Mr. Snatt, three non-juring clergymen, absolved them at the gallows with imposition of hands. Fourteen archbishops and bishops issued a declaration against them; and they were presented, indicted, imprisoned, and threatened with still severer punishment. Had they sent a dextrous barber to shave the poor mens' heads, it would have been a more appropriate mode of proceeding, and have done them more good.

ful manner the duty of association. Abused it has been in the foulest degree ; but what good thing has not ? He who thinks that a church should be insulated and unconnected with every other, has much yet to learn from the spirit of the Scriptures, and the lessons of ecclesiastical history.

In England, among voluntary societies, (the remark does not apply to establishments in which political regulations and civil authority shape the whole of their conduct,) associations and the spirit of religion have kept pace together. Indeed what is association among Christians and Christian churches, but their union to advance the cause of Christ. There is a period in the dissenting annals, when association, in most parts of the country, was almost extinct ; and it must be said of it, that it was a time of coldness and of death, and in which but little was done for the advancement of religion. In the first days of the dissent, the principle of association was active, and it was a good time. During the last twenty years, this spirit has attained at least its original energy ; and whether there be any period in which greater exertions have been made for the propagation of the Gospel, is left for the reader to determine.

As soon as the revolution enabled the dissenters to appear in public, a spirit of association began to be displayed. The elder ministers, remembering their classes and other public meetings during the interregnum, and the benefit and pleasure which they derived from them, were anxious that they should be resumed in a shape which their altered circumstances would permit. In order to form as broad a basis as possible, it was proposed by the London ministers to establish an union between the presbyterians and independents,

that both in the metropolis and in the country the ministers might hold their assemblies together for the general benefit. With this view, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety, a writing was drawn up, comprising such common principles as both parties could agree to subscribe ; and it was to be considered as the bond of their union. The object was accomplished ; and it was resolved that the ministers of the two denominations should henceforth go by the name of the united ministers.

As this writing shews in how many things, two of the principal denominations were agreed, and was to serve as the basis of their future union, so important a document merits insertion in a history of the dissenters.

“ The following heads of agreement have been resolved upon by the united ministers in and about London, formerly called presbyterian and congregational ; not as a measure for any national constitution, but for the preservation of order in our congregations, that cannot come up to the common rule by law established.

“ *I. Of Churches and Church Members.*

“ 1. We acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ to have one catholic church or kingdom, comprehending all that are united to him, whether in heaven or earth. And do conceive the whole multitude of visible believers and their infant seed, commonly called the catholic visible church, to belong to Christ's spiritual kingdom in this world : but for the notion of a catholic visible church here, as it signifies its having been collected into any formed society, under a visible, human

head on earth; whether one person singly, or many collectively, we, with the rest of the protestants, unanimously disclaim it.

“ 2. We agree that particular societies of visible saints, who, under Christ their head, are statedly joined together for ordinary communion with one another in all the ordinances of Christ, are particular churches, and are to be owned by each other as instituted churches of Christ, though differing in apprehensions and practices in some lesser things.

“ 3. That none shall be admitted as members, in order to communion in all the special ordinances of the Gospel, but such persons as are knowing and sound in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion, without scandal in their lives; and to a judgment regulated by the word of God, are persons of visible godliness and honesty; credibly professing cordial subjection to Jesus Christ.

“ 4. A competent number of such visible saints, as before described, do become the subjects of stated communion in all the special ordinances of Christ, upon their mutual declared consent and agreement to walk together therein according to the Gospel rule. In which declaration different degrees of explicitness shall no way hinder such churches from owning each other as instituted churches.

“ 5. Though parochial bounds be not of divine right, yet for common edification, the members of a particular church ought, as much as conveniently may be, to live near one another.

“ 6. That each particular church hath right to choose their own officers; and being furnished with such as are duly qualified, and ordained according to the Gospel rule, hath authority from Christ for exercising

government, and of enjoying all the ordinances of worship within itself.

“7. In the administration of church power it belongs to the pastors and other elders of every particular church, if such there be, to rule and govern ; and to the brotherhood to consent according to the rule of the Gospel.

“8. That all professors, as before described, are bound in duty, as they have opportunity, to join themselves as fixed members of some particular church ; their thus joining being part of their professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ, and an instituted means of their establishment and edification ; whereby they are under the pastoral care, and in case of scandalous or offensive walking may be authoritatively admonished or censured for their recovery ; and for vindication of the truth and the church professing it.

“9. That a visible professor, thus joined to a particular church, ought to continue stedfastly with the said church, and not forsake the ministry and ordinances there dispensed, without an orderly seeking a recommendation to another church, which ought to be given when the case of the person apparently requires it.

## “ II. *Of the Ministry.*

“1. We agree that the ministerial office is instituted by Jesus Christ, for the gathering, guiding, edifying, and governing of his church, and to continue to the end of the world.

“2. They, who are called to this office, ought to be endued with competent learning, and ministerial gifts ; as also with the grace of God, sound in judg-

ment, not novices in the faith and knowledge of the Gospel ; without scandal, of holy conversation, and such as devote themselves to the work and service thereof.

“ 3. That ordinarily none shall be ordained to the work of this ministry, but such as are called and chosen thereto by a particular church.

“ 4 That in so great and weighty a matter, as the calling and choosing a pastor, we judge it ordinarily requisite, that every such church consult and advise with the pastors of neighbouring congregations.

“ 5. That after such advice the person consulted about, being chosen by the brotherhood of that particular church, over which he is to be set, and he accepting, be duly ordained, and set apart to his office over them; wherein 'tis ordinarily requisite, that the pastors of neighbouring congregations concur with the preaching elder or elders, if such there be.

“ 6. That whereas such ordination is only intended for such as were never ordained before to the ministerial office ; if any judge, that in the case also of the removal of one formerly ordained, to a new station or pastoral charge, there ought to be a like solemn recommending him and his labours to the grace and blessing of God ; no different sentiments or practice herein shall be any occasion of contention or breach of communion among us.

“ 7. It is expedient that they who enter on the work of preaching the Gospel, be not only qualified for communion of saints, but also that, except in cases extraordinary, they give proof of their gifts and fitness for the said work unto the pastors of churches of known abilities to discern and judge of their qualifications ; that they may be sent forth with solemn



approbation and prayer, which we judge needful, that no doubt may remain concerning their being called to the work ; and for preventing, as much as in us lies, ignorant and rash intruders.

“ III. *Of Censures.*

“ 1. As it cannot be avoided, but that in the purest churches on earth, there will sometimes offences and scandals arise by reason of hypocrisy and prevailing corruption, so Christ hath made it the duty of every church to reform itself by spiritual remedies, appointed by him to be applied in all such cases ; viz. admonition and excommunication.

“ 2. Admonition, being the rebuking of an offending member in order to conviction, is in case of private offences to be performed according to the rule in Matt. xviii. 15, 16, 17. and in case of public offences, openly before the church, as the honour of the Gospel, and the nature of the scandal shall require : and if either of the admonitions take place for the recovery of the fallen person, all further proceedings in a way of censure are thereupon to cease, and satisfaction to be declared accordingly.

“ 3. When all due means are used, according to the order of the Gospel, for the restoring an offending and scandalous brother, and he notwithstanding remains impenitent, the censure of excommunication is to be proceeded unto ; wherein the pastor and other elders (if such there be), are to lead and go before the church, and the brotherhood to give their consent, in a way of obedience unto Christ, and unto the elders as over them in the Lord.

“ 4. It may sometimes come to pass, that a church member, not otherwise scandalous, may sinfully with-

draw, and divide himself from the communion of the church to which he belongeth ; in which case when all due means for the reducing him prove ineffectual, he having hereby cut himself off from that church's communion, the church may justly esteem, and declare itself discharged of any further inspection over him.

“ IV. *Of Communion of Churches.*

“ 1. We agree, that particular churches ought not to walk so distinct and separate from each other, as not to have care and tenderness towards one another ; but their pastors ought to have frequent meetings together, that by mutual advice, support, encouragement, and brotherly intercourse they may strengthen the hearts and hands of each other in the ways of the Lord.

“ 2. That none of our particular churches shall be subordinate to one another, each being endued with equality of power from Jesus Christ : and that none of the said particular churches, their officer, or officers, shall exercise any power, or have any superiority over any other church, or their officers.

“ 3. That known members of particular churches, constituted as aforesaid, may have occasional communion with one another in the ordinances of the Gospel ; viz. the word, prayer, sacraments, singing psalms, dispensed according to the mind of Christ ; unless that church with which they desire communion, hath any just exception against them.

“ 4. That we ought not to admit any one to be a member of our respective congregations, that hath joined himself to another, without endeavours of mutual satisfaction of the congregation concerned. ;

“ 5. That one church ought not to blame the proceedings of another, till it hath heard what that church charged, its elders, or messengers can say, in vindication of themselves from any charge of irregular or injurious proceedings.

“ 6. That we are most willing and ready to give an account of our church proceedings to each other when desired, for preventing or removing any offences that may arise among us. Likewise we shall be ready to give the right hand of fellowship, and walk together according to the Gospel rules of communion of churches.

“ V. *Of Deacons and ruling Elders.*

“ We agree, the office of a deacon is of divine appointment, and that it belongs to their office to receive, lay out, and distribute the churches stock to its proper uses, by the direction of the pastor and elders, if such there be. And whereas divers are of opinion, that there is also the office of ruling elders, who labour not in word and doctrine, and others think otherwise, we agree, that this difference make no breach among us.

“ VI. *Of Synods.*

“ 1. We agree, That in order to concord, and in any other weighty and difficult cases, it is needful, and according to the mind of Christ, that a synod be called to consult and advise about such matters.

“ 2. That a synod may consist of smaller or greater numbers, as the matter shall require.

“ 3. That particular churches, their respective elders and members, ought to have a reverential regard to the judgment of such synods, and not dissent

therefrom, without apparent grounds from the word of God.

*“ VII. Of our Demeanour towards the civil Magistrate.*

“ 1. We do reckon ourselves obliged continually to pray for God’s protection, guidance, and blessing upon the rulers set over us.

“ 2. That we ought to yield unto them not only subjection in the Lord, but support, according to our stations and abilities.

“ 3. That if at any time it shall be their pleasure to call together any number of us, or require any account of our affairs, and the state of our congregations, we shall most readily express all dutiful regard to them herein.

*“ VIII. Of a Confession of Faith.*

“ As to what appertains to soundness of judgment in matters of faith, we esteem it sufficient, that a church acknowledge the Scriptures to be the word of God, the perfect and only rule of faith and practice; and own either the doctrinal part of those commonly called the Articles of the Church of England, or the Confession, or Catechism, shorter, or larger, compiled by the assembly at Westminster, or the Confession agreed on at the Savoy, to be agreeable to the said rule.

*“ IX. Of our Duty and Deportment towards them that are not in Communion with us.*

“ 1. We judge it our duty to bear a Christian respect to fellow Christians, according to their several ranks and stations, that are not of our persuasion or communion.

" 2. As for such as may be ignorant of the principles of the Christian religion, or of vicious conversation, we shall in our respective places, as they give us opportunity, endeavour to explain to them the doctrine of life and salvation, and to our uttermost persuade them to be reconciled to God.

" 3. That such who appear to have the essential requisites to church communion, we shall willingly receive them in the Lord, not troubling them with disputes about lesser matters.

" As we assent to the forementioned heads of agreement, so we unanimously resolve, as the Lord shall enable us, to practice according to them."

In consequence of this agreement, they had stated meetings for the advancement of their cause, both in London and in the country: those in London were more frequent but more private; those in the country less frequent but more public and solemn.

The most celebrated of the country meetings was the Exeter assembly. The origin of this associated body may be traced back so far as the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-five. An assembly of the ministers of Devon and Cornwall was then formed, probably after the model of that established by Mr. Baxter and his brethren in Worcestershire, for mutual edification and counsel. George Hughes, of Plymouth, presided in the first assembly as moderator.

During the English reign of terror, which comprised the domination of the two last Stewarts, these useful meetings were suspended. But the revolution coming like the spring after a Greenland winter, which had frozen every noble principle in the soul,

dissolved the rigour of the past season, and unfolded the principles of association and affection. In the beginning of the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one the assembly was revived. There was a second meeting in the same year, at which Mr. Flavel was moderator, and preached. The principal business was to introduce the heads of agreement by the London ministers, into the west, and unite the presbyterians and independents of Devon and Cornwall as one body in their assembly. The object was happily attained. It was one of the last acts of Mr. Flavel's life; and he expressed the liveliest satisfaction on account of its success.

In the articles of concord, drawn up for their regulation, they agreed that they should not intermeddle with politics nor the affairs of civil government, nor pretend to exercise church censures, but only to assist, advise, and counsel each other in the propagation of truth and holiness, and in the preservation of their churches from illiterate ministers, and profane and scandalous communicants. A friendly intercourse was by this means maintained among the ministers and congregations in the two associated counties. When any persons offered themselves to the work of the ministry, the assembly examined their testimonials, assigned a subject for a thesis to the candidates, and appointed the ministers who were to ordain them.

Records of associations of a smaller size in Hampshire, and in Cheshire<sup>1</sup> still remain, and give us

<sup>1</sup> Sermon before an Assembly of the Ministers of Hampshire, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one, by Samuel Chandler, minister of Fareham.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Henry's Life, p. 256—259.

reason to conclude that they were spread over the greater part of England. The dispute about Dr. Crisp's works, which soon afterwards ensued, disturbed the harmony of the meetings in London ; but it does not appear to have had any effect on the country associations.

The baptists likewise had their public meetings during this period. In the reigns of Charles and James, they were constrained to drink their full share of the bitter cup of persecution. The court conceived them to have been more deeply engaged than others, in the transactions which took place during the suspension of the regal power, and had no pity for their miseries. Some excellent ministers of this denomination died in prison for preaching the Gospel, or more properly (considering what the English prisons were then) were robbed of their lives by the confinement which they endured<sup>x</sup>.

In the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-nine, a general assembly of the calvinistic or particular baptists was held in London "to consult of proper ways and means to advance the glory of God, and

<sup>x</sup> Much more commendation than was due has been given by Dr. Calamy to Mr. Tombes, who, after the act of uniformity sat down in inglorious ease at Sarum, and might be seen kneeling at the altar next to the greatest reprobate in the city, "and was in all points but infant-baptism," says bishop Burnet, "a zealous conformist." But whoever heard him preach in destitute places, or saw him expose himself by his ministerial labours to the penalties of the law as hundreds of his brethren? Whatever may be thought of the controversy between him and Baxter about infant baptism, Baxter was infinitely superior to him here. Had all acted like Tombes, the disseeping cause had died. If the praise so prodigally lavished on him, had been bestowed on Mr. Bampffield and other baptist confessors, it had been more justly bestowed.

the well-being of their churches." Deputies were present from more than a hundred churches in England and Wales. The assembly zealously disclaims all manner of authority over the churches, and professes that it is their sole intention to recommend in the way of counsel what may be for their benefit, which they wish to be received no farther than as it appeared agreeable to the word of God. A fast was recommended for lamenting national iniquities, and imploring a blessing on the union of the churches. A fund was established for relieving ministers in distress, for the support of itinerating preachers, and for assisting persons of promising talents in the acquisition of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew tongues, with a view to the work of the ministry<sup>1</sup>. Various questions proposed to them by the churches were considered, and answers given<sup>2</sup>. They are at pains to clear themselves as a body from the imputation of having been friendly to king James's dispensing with the penal laws; and they profess themselves the unalterable friends of civil liberty, and most strongly attached to king William both by gratitude and duty. They likewise published a confession of their faith, and adopted that

<sup>1</sup> In order to raise the fund, it is proposed and recommended that "a weekly subscription of a halfpenny, a penny, two, three, four, five, or sixpence a week should be set on foot in every congregation." The wonders which have been done by this mode in the hands of the Wesleyan Methodists, few could have conceived, if they had not seen.

<sup>2</sup> One of the questions relates to excess in dress among church members both men and women; to which the following answer is given, "that it is a shame for men to wear long hair, and long periwigs, especially ministers," 1 Cor. xi. 14. They add "that much time and treasure are foolishly wasted in adorning the body, what would be better spent in a careful endeavour to adorn the soul, and the charge laid out upon these superfluities to relieve the necessities of the poor saints, and to promote the interests of Jesus Christ."



which had been drawn up by them in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-seven. Its doctrinal articles accord with those of the reformed churches; and in those which respect government and discipline, with the exception of the section of infant baptism, it agrees with the confession of the independents at the Savoy. So great was the harmony of the members, who amounted to a hundred and fifty; that scarcely one brother dissented in his sentiments from the assembly in any one thing which was proposed to their consideration<sup>a</sup>.

Another general assembly of the same kind and for the same purposes was held at London, by the elders and messengers of the baptist churches in England and Wales, in the summer of the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one.

A third meeting was assembled in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-two, consisting of ministers and messengers, *i. e.* persons chosen by the churches to represent them. It continued sitting from the third to the twenty-fourth of May. The churches, belonging to the union, were one hundred and seven; and it did not include the whole of the particular baptists; for there were other churches of the same faith and order, which never joined the assembly. Those who did unite, feeling the inconvenience of coming from so great a distance, agreed to divide the assembly into two meetings to be held annually, the one in Bristol, at Easter, for the western part of England and Wales; the other, in London, at Whitsuntide, for the eastern part of the kingdom: and they devised various regulations for the advancement of the common cause<sup>b</sup>. Besides, there were associations

<sup>a</sup> Crosby vol. III. p. 245, 259.

<sup>b</sup> Crosby vol. III. p. 264, 5, 6,

in a narrower circle, where the members could frequently meet without inconvenience. The London ministers had a meeting for consultation every month.

The same spirit of union was displayed by the general or arminian baptists. At the restoration, a confession of their faith was presented to the king by Thomas Grantham, signed by himself and forty-one others, which he said was owned and approved by more than twenty thousand people; and he craved his majesty's favour and protection, in their behalf. It is supposed, that the denomination could scarcely reckon so many, when the revolution took place. It is to their praise, that like the other dissenters they wished to improve the enjoyment of religious liberty, for the benefit of their body. With this view, they had a general meeting in London, composed of representatives from their different churches, and for the same purposes as their calvinistic brethren. Sensible of the benefit resulting from the united counsel and co-operation, it was agreed by them that a meeting should be held every year in the metropolis. Perseverance marked their determination, and it has continued to the present time.

In addition to these associations, it will be proper to mention another in which all the three denominations bore a part: it was known by the name of the presbyterian, independent, and baptist boards. The ministers and chief men of each of these sects, in and around the metropolis, appointed meetings for promoting the interests of their body. In affairs which concerned them all as dissenters, they united their counsels; and when an affair required continued attention and activity, they chose persons from each

denomination to manage it, and to carry their plans into execution. By the presbyterians, as being most numerous and respectable, a claim was made that there should be two of their number on all such committees for one from the other bodies.

To these boards, the dissenters, throughout the kingdom, looked for protection under unjust sufferings from unreasonable men. They endeavoured to avert every evil which threatened the general cause, and sought the preservation of those distinguishing privileges which the constitution had conferred. It was likewise considered as a part of their business to correspond with the executive government on all proper occasions; and to render proper tokens of respect to the supreme magistrate at his accession to the throne, and in seasons of remarkable public calamity or success.

The first exercise of this intercourse was when William and Mary were seated on the British throne. The presbyterian and independent ministers drew up addresses, and went to court with the venerable Dr. Bates at their head, who delivered them to the king and queen. To dissenters in the present day, the sentiments of their predecessors, at the accession of each sovereign to the throne, will be an object of reasonable curiosity: their various addresses are therefore contained in this work.

“ TO THE KING.

“ May it please your Majesty,

“ The series of successful events, that has attended your glorious enterprize for the saving these kingdoms from so imminent and destructive evils, has been so eminent and extraordinary, that it may

force an acknowledgement of the divine providence from those who deny it, and raises admiration in all who believe and reverence it. The beauty and speed of this happy work are the bright signatures of his hand, who creates deliverance for his people. The less of human power, the more of the divine wisdom and goodness has been conspicuous in it. If the deliverance had been obtained by fierce and bloody battles, victory itself had been dejected and sad, and our joy had been mixed with afflicting bitterness. But as the sun, ascending the horizon, dispels without noise the darkness of the night; so your serene presence has without tumults and disorders, chased away the darkness that invaded us. In the sense of this astonishing deliverance, we desire with all possible ardency of affection, to magnify the glorious name of God the author of it, by whose entire efficacy the means have been successful: and we cannot without a warm rapture of thankfulness, recount our obligations to your majesty the happy instrument of it. Your illustrious greatness of mind in an undertaking of such vast expence; your heroic zeal in exposing your most precious life in such an adventurous expedition; your wise conduct and unshaken resolution in prosecuting your great ends, are above the loftiest flights of language, exceed all praise. We owe to your majesty the two greatest and most valuable blessings that we can enjoy, the preservation of the true religion, our most sacred treasure; and the recovery of the falling state, and the establishing it upon just foundations. According to our duty, we promise unfainting fidelity, and true allegiance to your majesty's person and government. We are encouraged by your gracious promise upon our first

address, humbly to desire and hope, that your majesty will be pleased, by your wisdom and authority, to establish a firm union of your protestant subjects in the matters of religion, by making the rule of Christianity to be the rule of conformity. Our blessed union in the purity and the peace of the Gospel, will make this church a fair and lovely type of heaven, and terrible to our anti-christian enemies. This will make England the steady centre from whence a powerful influence will be derived for the support of reformed Christianity abroad : this will bring immortal honour to your name, above the trophies and triumphs of the most renowned conquerors. We do assure your majesty, that we shall cordially embrace the terms of union, which the ruling wisdom of our Saviour has prescribed in his word. We shall not trespass farther upon your royal patience, but shall offer up our fervent prayers to the King of Kings, that he will please to direct your majesty by his unerring wisdom, and always incline your heart to his glory, and encompass your sacred person with his favour as with a shield, and make your government a universal blessing to these kingdoms."

His majesty was graciously pleased to make this answer, "I take kindly your good wishes ; and whatever is in my power shall be employed for obtaining such a union among you. I do assure you of my protection and kindness."

" TO THE QUEEN.

" May it please your majesty,

" Your happy arrival into your native country, and accession to the crown, have diffused an universal joy through this kingdom. It is an auspicious sign of pub-

lic felicity, when supreme virtue, and supreme dignity meet in the same person. Your inviolable firmness in the profession of the truth, and exemplary piety, are the most radiant jewels in your crown : the lustre of your conversation, unstained in the midst of tempting vanities, and adorned with every grace, recommends religion as the most honourable and amiable quality, even to those who are averse from hearing sermons, and apt to despise serious instructions and excitations to be religious. We humbly desire your majesty will be pleased by your wisdom and goodness to compose the differences between your protestant subjects in things of less moment concerning religion. We hope those reverend persons who conspire with us in the main end, the glory of God, and the public good, will consent to the terms of union, wherein all the the reformed churches agree. We shall sincerely address our requests to God, that he will please to pour down, in rich abundance, his blessings upon your majesty's person and government, and preserve you to his heavenly kingdom."

Her majesty was graciously pleased to answer them thus : " I will use all endeavours for obtaining a union, that is necessary for the edifying of the church. I desire your prayers."

Though it be a departure from a general rule, it would be injustice not to insert the address of condolence which the dissenting ministers presented to king William on queen Mary's death. This was likewise delivered by Dr. Bates.

“ THE DISSENTERS ADDRESS OF CONDOLENCE TO  
KING WILLIAM.

“ May it please your majesty,

“ Though we come in the rear of the train of mourners to pay our tributary tears for the invaluable loss, in the death of your royal consort, and our most gracious queen, yet our resentments of it are with as tender a sympathy as are in the breasts of any of your subjects. This gives the sharpest accent to our passions, that the considerations which are most proper and powerful to allay our sorrows, exasperate them: for while we remember what she was, how general and diffusive a blessing to the three kingdoms, the severe stroke of providence in taking her from us, is most afflicting. Such a concurrence of high perfection shined in her person and actions, that would have made her illustrious in a low condition; and in her exalted station, they were attractive of the eyes and admiration of all. Her mind was above the temptations that attend the throne. Majesty was mixed with that condescending humility, that tender and beneficent goodness, that she was easily accessible to all for their relief and support. Her piety and purity were so conspicuous, her affections were so composed and temperate, that the court, that is usually the centre of vanity and voluptuousness, became virtuous by the impression of her example. Her conversation was so regular, that her enemies (if goodness in such a bright eminency had any), could not fasten a taint upon her. Her royal endowments for government, wisdom, magnanimity, vigilance, and care in managing affairs of state (without which the highest princes are but civil idols, useless and unprofitable to the world), these were in such a degree of excellency, that in your majesty's

constrained absence, while you were defending the interests of christendom against a potent enemy abroad with the sword of war, she sweetly ordered all things at home with the sceptre of peace. She is gone and must return no more. O astonishing grief; but it becomes us with humble submission to acquiesce in the divine disposal. The will of God is always directed by infinite wisdom, and is the rule of goodness. We must refresh our sorrows with the hope that she is entered into her Saviour's joy, whom she imitated and honoured; and that she is made happy in the love of God, and the light of his countenance for ever.

“ We humbly beseech your majesty to accept the renewed assurances of our inviolable and constant fidelity to your person and government: and that we shall influence all who are within our compass to persevere in their duty. We shall earnestly pray to the blessed God to keep you in the best protection, his encompassing favour to support your spirit with divine comforts, and to continue long your precious life, so necessary for preserving the pure religion, and the civil rights of this kingdom.”

Dr. Calamy, who was present on the occasion, says, “ I well remember that, upon this speech, I saw tears trickle down the cheeks of that great prince, who so often appeared undaunted in the day of battle.”

Before the death of William, the baptist board, which perhaps had not been formed at the time of the revolution, began to act in concert with the others in public matters; and for the first time, when queen Anne ascended the throne, the ministers of the three denominations waited on her in a body with an



address, which was delivered by Dr. Daniel Williams.

“ TO HER MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY ANNE, BY  
THE GRACE OF GOD, QUEEN OF ENGLAND,  
SCOTLAND, FRANCE, AND IRELAND, DEFENDER  
OF THE FAITH.

“ Most gracious sovereign,

“ We, your majesty’s most loyal and dutiful subjects, the protestant dissenting ministers in and about the city of London, crave leave humbly to represent the deep sense we have of the unspeakable loss we and all your majesty’s good subjects suffer by the death of our late glorious monarch William the third.

“ But herein we are most sensibly and effectually relieved by your majesty’s most happy and peaceable succession to these crowns, whose rightful and undoubted title we acknowledge with the greatest sincerity, and whose constant zeal for the protestant religion is so justly renowned : for all which, with unfeigned joy, we bless and adore the divine goodness.

“ We farther beg leave to assure your majesty of our most dutiful affection, and inviolable fidelity to your royal person and government ; not doubting of our share in the many blessings of your majesty’s wise and happy reign, which we heartily pray may be long over us.”

Before we close this chapter it will be proper briefly to notice the state of the dissenters in Wales.

The father of them is said to have been John Penry, mentioned in a former part of the work, who

studied at both universities, took the degree of M. A. at Oxford, and preached in both the seats of learning with approbation. He afterwards returned to his native country, and is supposed to have been the first who preached the Gospel there in purity. The seed which he sowed brought forth fruit. More effectually to serve the Welch, he sought to interest the government in their favour by publishing an account of their deplorable condition. He was a learned and pious man: but neither his learning nor his piety could offer any atonement to the bishops for his being a Brownist, and expressing his aversion to the constitution of the Anglican church. For this crime, by their instigation, he suffered death in the year one thousand five hundred and ninety-three, in the thirty-fourth year of his age<sup>c</sup>.

About the year one thousand six hundred and twenty, it is supposed, Mr. Wroth was raised up in support of the same principles. He was educated at Oxford, and was appointed rector of Llanfaches, in Monmouthshire. Being ejected from his rectory, he preached around the country, and in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-nine formed a dissenting church at Llanfaches. A folio edition of the Welch bible had been published in the year one thousand five hundred and eighty-eight, but it was not till the year one thousand six hundred and thirty that it was printed in a portable form, and became accessible to the mass of the people. This was of unspeakable importance to the propagation of religion in the principality: but as it is probable that few comparatively had learned to read, the influence of the Scriptures among them must have been slow

<sup>c</sup> See Neal, v. 374—9. quarto edition.

degrees. This is confirmed by unquestionable authority<sup>d</sup>.

Not long after Mr. Wroth, William Erbury and Walter Cradock, both of the university of Oxford, raised the standard of puritanism at St. Mary's, in Cardiff, of which the former was vicar, and the latter curate. That harsh treatment which the puritans received in England extended itself to Wales; and first the curate, and afterwards the vicar, was ejected from the cure. Grieved at the necessities of the people, they went about the country as itinerant preachers, and their labours were accompanied with remarkable success. Vavasor Powell, a man afterwards famous, and Morgan Lloyd, were among the number of their converts. On the breaking out of the civil wars, Erbury, Cradock, and Powell, with their principal adherents, were, by the violence of the high church party, compelled to leave their native country, and seek for a sanctuary in England.

<sup>d</sup> Mr. V. Powell, in a work published by him, in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-one, says, "that the professors of religion were very few in Wales, except in the corners of two or three counties; and that about that time a petition was sent to the king and parliament, that upon diligent search there were scarcely to be found as many conscientious, diligent preachers, as there were counties in Wales; and that the few who were there, were either silenced or much persecuted."

- <sup>e</sup> Wood in his *Athenæ Oxon.* vol II. says "Mr. William Erbury became student in Oxford, in the year one thousand six hundred and nineteen, took one degree in arts, retired into Wales, and was beneficed. But that he preached in conventicles, and refusing to read the king's declaration for pastimes after divine service on the Lord's-day, he was summoned divers times to the high commission court at Lambeth, where he suffered for his obstinacy." He then cites a passage out of Laud's annual account of his province for the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-four, which runs thus :

When a close was put to these dreadful commotions, they returned again into Wales, and exerted themselves with all their might for the reformation of the people. An act of the parliament, which passed in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-nine, for the propagation of the Gospel there, paved the way for their more extended services, and added to the number of their fellow-labourers. So considerable was the progress, that though, at the commencement of the civil wars, there were not above two or three nonconformist churches in the principality, before the restoration there were upwards of twenty, and some of them so numerous as to contain more than five hundred members.

The ministers ejected in Wales by the act of uniformity were in general men of learning; and when deprived of their livings, while they continued to preach as they had opportunity, they set up schools, and were eminently useful in diffusing knowledge among the rising generation. They likewise rendered considerable service to the cause of religion by

“Llandaff diocese. The bishop of Llandaff certifies that this year (one thousand six hundred and thirty-four), he visited his diocese, and found that W. Erbury, vicar of St. Mary's, in Cardiff, and Walter Cradock his curate have been very disobedient to his majesty's instruction, and have preached schismatically and dangerously to the people. For this he hath given the vicar a judicial admonition, and will further proceed if he do not submit. As for his curate Walter Cradock being a bold, ignorant, young fellow, he hath suspended him, and taken away his licence, which he had to serve the cure.” Neal mentions that Wroth and Erbury were summoned to London, in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-five, and there condemned as the great troublers of the church in Wales. One of the chief crimes laid to their charge was “refusing to read the declaration for the book of sports on the Lord's-day.”

instructing young men for the ministry of the Gospel, and for literary professions in civil life.

By the revolution their bonds were burst asunder, and they were enabled to pursue their ministerial labours in security and peace. The consequence of this was a gradual increase of congregations ; so that, at the close of the period, the number of dissenting churches amounted to forty-three.

## CHAP. VII.

STATE OF RELIGION AMONG THE DISSENTERS  
DURING THIS PERIOD.

**T**O ascertain and delineate the advancement or decay of faith and holiness, in the hearts and lives of those who profess to be the followers of Christ, is the grand object of ecclesiastical history. The writers of this work, considering this as their principal theme, wish all the other parts to be viewed as bearing upon it, and having respect to it as the chief and ultimate end.

Just sentiments of the Christian system, liberal views of moral truth, enlarged conceptions of the rights of conscience, and a resolute adherence to the principles of religious liberty, if considered apart from mans immortal destinies, and unconnected with his eternal interests, lose by far the greater part of their value. They become then only an inferior object of literary research, and political discussion; and would not have engaged the attention of the authors, who consider themselves to be, from the nature of their office, consecrated to more important services. But when viewed in their close relation to mans spiritual welfare, and in their tendency to promote the salvation of the soul, they then become a nobler theme; for they acquire by this means unspeakable worth: they may with justice be eagerly sought, and very highly prized, indeed they can scarcely be prized too

much. They are the scaffold on which the builder stands, while he erects that glorious fabric which is to endure for ever, and in which he is eternally to dwell. Their use consecrates them to the service of the sanctuary, and renders them a legitimate object of regard to a minister of Jesus Christ. For their tendency to promote pure religion in the heart, and their utility in augmenting its influence, they have been spoken of with affection and regard, and held up before the eyes of every reader as an object of merited esteem. To ascertain that influence, by attempting an inquiry into the state of religion among the dissenters during the reigns of king William and queen Anne, is the design of the present chapter.

It is certainly a subject of just complaint, that scarcely any one department of sacred literature has been occupied to less advantage than that of ecclesiastical history. The writers are the more inexcusable, as they had before them a perfect pattern in the account which the evangelist Luke has given of the planting of the Christian church by the ministry of the apostles. But those who followed him in that office seem to have forgotten their inspired predecessor. In this respect Eusebius has wandered from the right path as far as most of his successors. The exterior part of the work is presented to us with sufficient fulness, but the interior structure is not disclosed to view. The number of the worshippers of the outer court, the names and succession of the bishops, their quarrels and contentions with each other, their pretensions to dignity, wealth, and power, and their outward sufferings from their adversaries, these are fully delineated, for they are the chief topics on which they dwell. But the advancement of spiri-

tual religion in the souls of men, the conversion of sinners, and the edifying lives of the disciples in the exercise of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, are topics for which their readers will look almost in vain. If now and then something of a spiritual nature drops from their pens, such as the prayer of a convert, the faith of a Christian, the patience of a confessor, or the hope and joy of a martyr, it is truly delightful and refreshing amidst the desert ; but how seldom does it occur !

A person professing to give an account of the Jewish church during the time of Christ's abode upon earth, would but ill perform his task, if he confined all his attention to the intrigues of Annas and Caiaphas, the ostentatious formality of the Scribes and Pharisees, and the tyranny of Herod and Pontius Pilate ; but took no notice of the piety and devotion of Simeon and Anna, and those that waited for consolation in Israel, their holy peaceful lives, and their willing and joyful death. Yet these were the true Jewish church, and alone worshipped God in spirit and in truth. The others resemble the images of stone in the exterior of a cathedral : they are mere worldly men connected indeed with the church, but regarding it only so far as it serves for a pillar for them to stand on, while they excite and enjoy the admiration of the multitude, and are the better enabled to pursue their plans of temporal aggrandisement.

In this manner, to the serious injury of mankind, the greater part of the historians of the Christian church have conducted their details in succession to the present time. Full and long narrations are given of the life, the actions, the quarrels, the controversies and the plans of proud, ambitious, worldly, and poli-



tical men, who, though they wore mitres on their heads, and had crosiers in their hands, were utterly destitute of the spirit of the Gospel, and regarded the church only as a theatre in which they might indulge their avarice, their ambition, or sensuality. They might cry out "the church, the church," with as piteous a moan, and as loud a voice, as those of old, who exclaimed. "great is Diana of the Ephesians;" but they had nothing more in view than those ancient Pagans: and the meaning of both was the same, "by this craft, we have our living." While these unedifying details fill the ecclesiastical page, the influence of the Gospel in converting sinners to God, the efficacy of preaching, the ardent devotions of the faithful, the persevering labours of zealous ministers, the patient sufferings of believers, and their active efforts for the propagation of the truth pass unnoticed, or are mentioned in so general a way as to leave no distinct impression on the mind. To this cause most probably, the cutting observation of Grotius must be ascribed: *qui Historiam Ecclesiasticam legit, nihil legit præter vitia episcoporum.*"

There have been indeed in every century bitter lamentations uttered of the corruption of the age. But remarks of this nature are too often made to gratify the writer's pride, for he must in courtesy be supposed free from the vices which he laments. Where they proceed from a sincere and pious disposition of mind the general accusation of his contemporaries in the mass is seldom just, and is not calculated to do good. The historian considers all his countrymen as Christians, because Christianity is the national religion: whereas to do justice to characters, he ought to have discriminated between believers, and the men of

the world; between those who apparently made it the grand business of life to follow Christ, and such as are Christians on the same grounds as some nations are Mahometans, and others Pagans; not because they ever examined the evidence or goodness of the system, but because it happened to be the established religion of their country.

On extensive examination it will be found, that this has been the common method of ecclesiastical writers nearly to the present time. From this unhappy circumstance our researches into the real state of the religion of the heart among the professors of Christianity in any former period are attended with the greatest difficulties. By two excellent men, who have lately been called away from the exercise of their ministry into the joy of their Lord, the arduous work was undertaken. Mr. Newton, whose praise is in all the churches, proceeded no farther than to the end of the first century. By having the sacred writers continually to apply to he was furnished with abundance of the best materials, and he used them with skill and with success. It is a subject of just regret that he did not proceed with his work, as he showed himself well qualified to prosecute the subject to advantage. His volume is truly valuable; and it will be difficult to find one which can equally claim the appellation of a Christian church history. The other, Mr. Milner, of Hull, brought his history of the church down to the reformation from popery, but not with an equal portion of the liberal spirit which distinguished his predecessor, nor with equal success. His unfeigned piety every where appears, but his materials were scanty and defective. In order to produce a spiritual history he is com-

pelled to ransack the writings of the fathers, and to make large extracts from their doctrinal and devotional treatises. In consequence of this his volumes present to us, in the mass of their contents, rather the biography of individuals than a history of the community of believers.

The period of the commencement of this work preserves it, in a considerable degree, from the same inconveniences. From the proximity of time there still remain sufficient sources of information, to which application can be made with efficacy and success; and from which a sufficiently accurate judgment of the state of spiritual religion among the dissenters may be derived.

The external circumstances in which they were placed, merit, in this view, the attention of the reader. All the older members of the congregations during this period were persons who had lived in the days of persecution, and whose profession of non-conformity exposed them to the risk of losing both their liberty and their substance, and to the certain loss of their reputation and influence in civil society. Had they been ignorant men, obstinate prejudice might have been supposed to bind them fast to the faith of their progenitors. But few in any age were better instructed in the doctrines and duties of Christianity, and could give a more reasonable account of the hope which was in them. While they were contented to suffer for their profession, always to be despised on account of their singularities, and frequently to endure very serious injuries, it is not an unfair conclusion that the state of religion among them was prosperous.

This argument however it is not our design to

leave standing by itself, but we wish it to be taken into view along with other considerations. The first of these is the principles of religion which the dissenters maintained. A brief sketch of them will enable a Christian reader to perceive the influence which they might be expected to have on such as held them, and suffered for them.

From pure principles only can spiritual religion spring: "sanctify them through thy truth," says the Redeemer, "thy word is truth." And it may be laid down as an axiom, that human opinions, different from divine truth, can never sanctify the soul; they have not the tendency, and they cannot have the effect. On this account, most probably, it is that the church of England denounces an anathema on "those who hold that a man may be saved by his sect." The truths of natural religion, which are supposed to delineate the character of God, and display the obligations of man, are represented by the spirit of the New Testament as insufficient to make men "wise unto salvation." According to its dictates there must be a discovery of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God; because it is this Gospel which alone "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Should inquiry be made, what are those general principles of Christianity which may be considered as necessary to be known, in order to the existence and exercise of spiritual religion in the heart;—the following are conceived to be so important, that to look for the prosperity of vital godliness where they are not preached from the pulpit, nor believed and maintained, is altogether vain.

A view of the character of God as the holy and

righteous governor of the universe, and blending with the display of his goodness the necessary existence and exercise of sanctity and rectitude: so that he cannot, from his very nature, but abhor all iniquity, and in his conduct treat it as unspeakably displeasing in his sight.

The state of man by the fall as a depraved creature, guilty before God of numberless offences; on account of his depravity and guilt exposed to the divine displeasure; and unable of himself to make atonement for his guilt, or to change his heart from the love of sin to the love of God, and by these means deliver himself from the miserable condition in which he lies.

The character and office of Christ as God manifest in the flesh, mediator between God and man, who, by the merits of his obedience unto death, has procured eternal redemption for perishing sinners; so that we are accepted by God not on our own account, but his only; and obtain the blessings of the Gospel as the free gift of God, flowing to us through Jesus Christ, who is made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption!

The way of receiving salvation through Christ, which begins not with us but with God, and is the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart, who produces the first good thoughts and desires in the soul, who renews the heart, who produces in it repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ: and as he begins the good work, his influences are necessary to carry it on unto perfection, and to complete it unto the coming of our Lord and Saviour to receive his disciples to the possession of the heavenly glory.

Since the sinner must come to the throne of grace as a suppliant imploring mercy, to which, from any goodness in himself, he has no claim, so the Christian is ever to live in the exercise of self-denial, taking up his cross and following Christ; not conformed to the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living soberly, righteously, and godly in a present world; striving against sin; watching against his spiritual foes; and constantly depending on divine grace for ability for every good thought, and word, and work, "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Every person, whatever be his character, who refuses to apply to God through Christ for mercy, and does not depend on his mediation for the pardon of sin and acceptance with God, and a title to eternal life; but goes on in his transgressions, and seeks to work out and establish a righteousness of his own, on which he may depend, and on account of which God may receive him into favour, and bestow on him the kingdom of heaven, is in the condition of those who are described in John iii. 36. "And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." "For this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John v. 11, 12.

From the perusal of the sacred Scriptures these truths appear to lie at the foundation of true piety in the soul. Whenever they are generally preached by the ministers of any denomination of Christians, there is one of the grand requisites to a flourishing state of religion. When these truths run through the whole

of their ministrations, and leaven every part of their system; when they are delivered with ability, with simplicity, with affection, and in an experimental manner; that is, when their influence on the hearts and lives of men is delineated with sacred skill and holy fervour, it is a still more favourable sign that vital godliness prevails.

When, in a whole denomination, there are but a few persons of this character, and who preach in this manner, no certain inference can be drawn as to the general spirit of the people: we may conceive that in the societies to which they minister, religion may be in a flourishing state, while in all others there will be nothing but ignorance and formality. But if nearly the whole body of the ministers preach these precious truths in purity, and with energy, the most favourable conclusion may be drawn as to the measure of piety diffused among their people. Such was, at this time, the case among the nonconformists. With the exception of a few among the general baptists, and some individuals among the presbyterians, and those not openly, but in a secret manner, and in a negative way, by keeping back the truth, rather than by positively instilling error (and it may be questioned whether they amounted to a dozen in the whole), the rest professed these principles to be the articles of their faith, preached them according to their abilities, and very many of their number with an eminent degree of judgment, purity, and zeal.

In the whole history of the Christian church it would perhaps be difficult to find so great a number of ministers in any one religious community, by whom the principles stated above were more generally preached. Those heroes of Christ, the noncon-

formists, whose faith stood the test of persecution, and who exhibited a noble band of confessors for the truth, were one after another finishing their course during this period: a few only survived to the next. But those who entered into their labours brought forward the same doctrine which they had been accustomed to preach; and indeed congregations so intelligent, and so pious, would have borne with nothing else. The books published by the dissenting ministers of this time; the lives of good men, some of which give an extensive account of the spirit and doctrine of all the pastors around; and the testimony of aged Christians still living who, in their early years, received from the ancients of the preceding generation an account of what they knew of those men from personal acquaintance, and attendance on their ministry, all unite to confirm the assertions which have been made of their soundness in their faith, as well as of their piety and devotedness to the cause of Christ.

From this consideration it is no unfair inference, that real religion reigned in the hearts of a considerable proportion of the people in the dissenting congregations during this period.

As their doctrine was purely evangelical, their manner of presenting it was well adapted to promote that unfeigned piety which is the great end of preaching. The old puritan mode was the original pattern: it was adopted, with a few changes, by the nonconformists, some of whom were still filling the pulpits: and the younger race of dissenting ministers being taught by them retained the great outlines of their method, but improved by a diminution of the num-



ber of their subdivisions, an improvement which they owed to the later pieces of some of the nonconformists, and to the works of Tillotson, Barrow, Stillingfleet, Whithcot, and other popular preachers in the establishment.

There was in their discourses a considerable portion of evangelical doctrine. They insisted chiefly on the most important subjects; and the minds of the hearers were habitually recalled to the view of redeeming love. The efficacy of this is incalculable. Topics of inferior moment, however ably and ingeniously treated, want force and power: the effect produced is feeble on the hearts both of sinners and of saints.

Their sermons contained much exposition of the holy Scripture: they illustrated one passage by comparing it with another; and they searched deep into the meaning of the sacred Oracles. In this respect they have not been excelled in any age of the Christian church: and rendering honour to the Spirit of God by holding up his truth before the eyes of their hearers, he likewise honoured them, and made their discourses effectual for the salvation of souls; and by this method of preaching Christians were greatly edified and comforted.

In very many of these ministers there was a simplicity of manner, a perspicuity of representation, and a familiarity of illustration, calculated to make a strong impression on the people. An example of this will be found in the posthumous discourses of Mr. Howe, who lived through more than half this period: they were taken from his lips while he preached, and published from the manuscripts of those who copied them.

A close and pungent application of the doctrine to

the conscience always closed their sermons ; and it was like an arrow shot at the heart, and piercing it to the core. In adapting the truths to the diversified conditions of their hearers, they displayed a measure of spiritual wisdom which has seldom been equalled, never excelled. The effect of this was mighty. The general way of preaching used by the ablest divines in the establishment, at the time, was in comparison as to effects, but like a pointless arrow.

In addition to all these, a warm affectionate, animated manner was exceedingly common ; and while the mind was enlightened with the truth, did all that human efforts could to render their discourses effectual for the salvation of their hearers. It is to be remembered that they were also men of prayer, and placed a constant reliance on the Holy Spirit for his influence to give efficacy to their labour.

To their preaching, as a means of advancing religion, we may with justice unite their public prayers. They had learned in the school of persecution and suffering to wrestle mightily with God, and to pour out their hearts before him in fervent supplications night and day ; and, in this way, they sought from God the comfort which was denied by man. From this school they brought forth with them into the sanctuary of God superior measures of powerful eloquence, and a holy unction which penetrated more deeply than any discourses into the hearts of the people, and produced in their congregations effects highly beneficial to the interests of pure religion.

Among the things calculated to have a favourable influence on the spirit of religion, it may be proper to mention the improvement in psalmody, which, during

this period, took place among the dissenters. The form of this part of worship, as it has been conducted in the British empire, was, if we may credit the authority of Dr. Heylin, imported from the continent of Europe, and had its origin in France. When a metrical translation of the Psalms of David, by Marot and Beza, was first published, it became fashionable at court by the countenance of the king and queen, who used to sing them to tunes which they had before learnt; and it was afterwards adopted by the professors of the reformed religion in every part of the kingdom; and by their influence was received into other countries on the continent, which had embraced the system of doctrine, and of church government, which bore Calvin's name. The English, at first, followed the mode of chanting psalms, and hymns, and anthems, which was practised in the church of Rome, and which the reformers had learnt while in her communion.

When the most zealous of the English reformers were driven by Mary's persecution into Switzerland and Geneva, they learned this foreign mode, and perhaps liked it the better, because it differed from the Romish form. Elizabeth being firmly seated on the English throne, those honourable refugees returned home, and brought back with them a predilection for singing the praises of God in their metrical compositions according to the practice of the reformed churches abroad: and it seems they had influence sufficient to procure its adoption by the English church. Of this Heylin bitterly complains, as a "presbyterian trick."

But whatever was its origin, it established itself as a part of public worship; and for near a century and a half was the general usage as well of the episcopal

church as of every other sect. During that time, the protestant people of England, while in their prayers, and in their sermons, they were Christians, in their praises, were little better than Jews. Many an eminent believer, who joined in the public worship for fifty years, never sang the name of Jesus till he arrived in heaven. Nor was the manner less defective than the matter: the uncouth rhymes of Hopkins and Sternhold grated the ear from every desk; and the tedious drawl of every syllable, far beyond the bounds of edification, was heard from every pew<sup>f</sup>.

The nonconformists, being acquainted with this rugged muse, continued with her for a while. Some of them afterwards used the Scotch metrical translation, which is rather superior to the other. A version by bishop Patrick, who, however, was more skilful in composing prayers than psalms of praise, was the text book of many congregations. The labours of Mr. Barton supplied the psalmody of others; while Tate and Brady furnished better poetry for such as chose to adopt their translation. But all these wore a Jewish garb; and there was still wanting a collection of hymns suited to the worship of a Christian church. There was matter in abundance within the boards of the New Testament: and why devotional passages in the Christian Scriptures should not be turned into metre for public worship as well as the Psalms of David, let every one, who objects to the practice, assign a satisfactory reason.

<sup>f</sup> That this antiquated version should still be used in many churches, must excite astonishment in all who do not consider that established churches are stationary, and do not advance along with the improvements of succeeding ages.

Dr. Watts had the honour to be the man who introduced the salutary change. Living at Southampton with his father, after he had concluded his academical studies, his correct ear and elegant taste were offended with the rude psalmody; and he complained of its defects. His father, who was a deacon of the church, desired him to try if he could amend it. A hymn was composed by him, was sung, and was approved. Another was asked, and another, and thus a collection was gradually formed, which grew into a volume; and by its excellence recommended itself to the various dissenting congregations throughout England, which, in time, adopted it, as it were, by general consent. Since then, many collections of various merit have appeared. But as the doctor was the first, he is entitled to peculiar praise. Hundreds of captains have annually conducted their vessels to the West Indies for a century past: but the honour which is due to Columbus we do not confer on them<sup>c</sup>.

The spiritual improvement, to be derived from such a manual of devotional psalmody, is great, and deserves to be mentioned among the means of advancing pure religion in the heart. Nor should it be omitted, that the doctor highly disapproving the unreasonable protraction of sound on every syllable, endeavoured, at the same time, to introduce a quicker, and more lively, and animated manner of singing, which, while it was more pleasing to the ear, tended more powerfully to draw forth the affections in expressions of desire, and love, and gratitude, and joy<sup>d</sup>.

<sup>c</sup> Dr. Watts' Life.

<sup>d</sup> The effects of Dr. Watts' sacred poetry in purifying the taste must have been far from inconsiderable. It was in constant use. It

Another rule, by which we may form a judgment of the state of religion, is the conduct of those who profess to be Christ's disciples. There is a decent behaviour, not uncommon in the world, which preserves men from gross and open vices; but from this, nothing certain can be deduced, because it discovers no particular veneration for God, nor regard for his authority. But there are practices, both in religion, and in civil life, which give decision to a person's character, and lead impartial judges to entertain a favourable opinion of his piety. As the principles of dissenters were good, should their practice be found to correspond, the conclusion must be to the honour of their religious profession.

There are some things in Christian practice, which relate immediately to religion, and others to the conduct in civil life. Of the first sort, there are two which may be considered as peculiarly marking the character, and distinguishing those, who observe them, from the men of the world; namely, family worship, and the sanctification of the Lord's-day. If a person does not make conscience of these; if family worship is seldom or never performed; and if, after the public worship of the Sabbath, the rest of the day is given up to business or pleasure, to unprofitable visits, and worldly conversation, what is there to stamp his character as a Christian, and to distinguish him from "the world which lieth in wickedness?" Whatever he may be as a member of civil society, he will

was read at every meeting for worship. Children laid it up in their memory: and grown people repeated it in order to treasure up its charming ideas in the mind. It must, of consequence, have affected their language in prayer, their conversation, and their discourse on religious subjects.

by the mass of religious people, be excluded from the rank of an exemplary disciple of Christ.

In both these observances, the dissenters were peculiarly eminent. It was the general custom among them, for the master of the family to call his household together, to read the Scriptures for their instruction, and to offer up prayer and praise to God. Where they had skill in psalmody, they made a pleasing addition by singing of psalms and hymns. They likewise devoted the whole of the Lord's-day to the services of religion. Public worship was accounted by them one of the first duties : and after attending in the house of God, they devoted the rest of the sacred time to the instruction of their families, and to the private and secret exercises of devotion. The complaints of the tediousness of such a day, and of the irksomeness of such regulations to the younger branches of a family, which are urged against this manner of spending the hallowed time, will be found destitute of foundation, where children have been trained up to it from their earliest years.

Another religious practice, universally adopted by those among them who laid claim to the religious character, was the exercise of secret devotion. One sect, it has been observed, excels in their devotedness to one part of the Christian system, and another to another. If it should be asked what excellence shall be assigned to the dissenters, an answer may be given without hesitation,—“ their attention to the secret exercises of devotion.” Morning and evening they had their seasons of retirement ; and, according to their degrees of leisure or piety, half an hour, an hour, or more was employed in reading the Scriptures, in perusing the most spiritual writings, chiefly of the

puritans and nonconformists, in meditation, in self-examination, and in prayer. From these employments, they came forth into the bosom of their family and to the duties of their station in society, with a sweet savour of divine things upon their heart, and a reverence for God which communicated sanctity to their temper, and integrity to their conduct.

Where the influence of religion is powerfully felt in the soul, it may be supposed that it will likewise generate some peculiarities of conduct in the ordinary routine of life. If there be nothing in the deportment of a man professing to be a Christian, by which he can be distinguished from those who evidently take no pains to regulate their lives by the Gospel, there is reason to fear that the principles of religion have never renewed his heart. When our blessed Lord affectionately describes his disciples, "ye are not of the world;" and by his spirit in the apostles gives this injunction, "Be not conformed to this world," we have the highest authority to conclude, that there must be a difference, and that the difference is great. It marked the character of the dissenters of those days; and the peculiarity of their conduct rendered them the sport of the ungodly, and the mark of ridicule to the careless and profane.

Their family regulations were strict, they were enforced with energy, and they were observed. The younger persons were subject to parental authority, and restrained from intimate familiarity with such as were reckoned improper companions of those who fear God. The whole family was laid under what they conceived to be the restraints of the Gospel.

Diligence in business was another feature in their



character. Sober industry, and an assiduous pursuit of their temporal affairs were considered as becoming their profession. There was, at the same time, a frugality, an economical arrangement of their affairs, a distance from parade and show; and they lived under, rather than above their rank and circumstances in life. In consequence of this, a bankruptcy, in a dissenter, was then almost unknown.

The amusements of the world, to which both the busy and the idle have recourse for pleasure, the dissenters of this period in general looked upon with disapprobation; and all, who made any pretensions to religion, abstained entirely from them. At a card table, at an assembly, and at the theatre, a dissenter, professing to be a man of piety, could not be found. Among the more sober delights of domestic life, they sought their pleasure. This was a general rule and a distinguishing feature of the sect. By some, this peculiarity of conduct may be branded with the name of unnecessary preciseness, and monkish severity; but a brief statement of the subject will plainly shew, that they are able to vindicate their practice.

When a thing is in direct opposition to the precepts of the Gospel, every one who understands the system, will cry out against it as a crime: and when there is an express command for the performance of an act, every one will acknowledge it to be a duty. But there are practices which appear in so harmless a form, that in the judgment of many, they are neither prohibited nor enjoined: they, therefore, consider them as indifferent, and abstain from them or indulge in them according to their taste and pleasure. Such as indulge in them, conceive that they do nothing contrary to

the Gospel, and to their Christian profession. This is a very common sentiment with respect to amusements ; and under that name people usually include balls, assemblies, and theatrical entertainments.

The following defence of abstinence from amusements by a dissenter of the primitive stock and spirit will give some idea of what those, who think with him, have to say in their own behalf. There was a large company, and the conversation turned on amusements. A decent old lady, who sat by him, knowing his sentiments, said to him, “ pray, sir, what harm can there be in cards, or an assembly, or in the theatre ? I keep to my church, and the sacrament, and prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays : and if I spend two or three hours in an evening at the card-table, and carry my nephew and niece with me to our monthly assembly, and eight or ten times a year we go together to the play, you are a rigid man if you blame our conduct. Shew me where such things are forbidden in the word of God.”

Some were silent, but most of those who were present ranged themselves on her side, and with the exultation of triumph demanded the reasons for this queer opinion. Being thus pressed, he entered on the subject in his own vindication, and said, “ you will, my friends, while I talk to you, carry this in your thoughts, that I confine my reasoning to Christians. That amusements will suit the taste of the people of the world, and be agreeable to their inclinations, and be, as it were, their heaven, is readily granted ; and that, while they are under the dominion of earthly principles, they will not think these scenes of vanity unsuitable to their ideas of the Christian religion, nor incompatible with their profession of

it. But that these amusements accord with the sentiments, pursuits, and engagements of a true Christian I cannot assent. I must likewise insist that the character of a Christian is deduced intirely from the word of God, and not from the sentiments of the fashionable world: you must therefore weigh my reasoning in the balance of the sanctuary, not in the scales of human opinion. It is enjoined on a Christian, you know, not only that he should turn away with abhorrence from every sin, but that he should avoid every appearance of evil, and shun those things which are not of good report. And is not this the light in which such practices have been regarded by truly pious people, not in one sect of Christians but in all, not merely in the present but in every preceding age.

“ Besides, if, for the sake of argument, it were granted that there is no positive evil in them, it will not be pretended that there is any good either in their nature or their tendency. But ought not every Christian to aspire after as exalted a measure of excellence of character as it is possible for him to attain? Ought he not to aim at presenting before the eyes of the world a pattern of purity and dignified goodness of the highest kind? But can you say that amusements conduce to so noble an end? Is it by them that such characters have been formed, or by them that they are sustained? The kings of France had no box at the theatre; it was conceived beneath their dignity to be there.

“ But I have stronger accusations to bring. I charge all those amusements with producing a waste of precious time. How many hours of life are here consumed in what neither improves the mind, nor conduces to health. When relaxation is necessary, it

may be found in exercises which, while they unbend the mind, enlarge its stores of useful knowledge, and giving vigour to the body, render it more fit for labour. But the waste of time by those who make these amusements a part of the plan of life is gravely to be considered: the number of hours consumed in such useless things will form a very serious and extensive article of what they must give an account of, at the day of judgment.

“But I must charge them with a positive evil influence, and this is, in my mind, a more weighty objection against them. Are they not the common resort of the irreligious? Are they not, if their station will permit, to be found at the card table, the assembly, and the theatre? Are not these their delight, their heaven? Will it be presumption to hint, that the fondness of such persons gives reason to suspect that there is something in them which is wrong, when you see them to be the universal resort of those who are not only destitute of religion, but under the influence of the worst principles, and addicted to the most vicious practices.

“How can you bear, madam, to herd with such companions. You, as well as myself, are advancing in life, and have been taught by experience to respect ourselves; and have a regard to the company which we keep. How then can you bear with such associates? But if submitting to the dishonour, and conceiving that you will receive no injury from their vicious principles, how can you introduce your nephew and niece into such society? They are in the bloom of life, when the heart is sensible of the faintest impression: the charms of conversation and manners which such sort of persons frequently pos-

ness (and it is all that they can boast of), will instil the poison of evil more certainly into the soul. In such company, they will soon learn to be ashamed of religion, and to blush at the idea of denying themselves, taking up their cross, and following Christ. A bias of an opposite nature is produced: dissipation of mind is the certain consequence, and levity of disposition, and the rank growth of appetites and passions unfavourable to the pure virtues of the heart, and to the innocence of the Christian character. The exercises of devotion lose all their relish; they dislike every thing that is serious; and they soon afterwards dislike those who are lovers of seriousness. A new set of acquaintances is acquired, who displace the old; the grave and the wise make room for the thoughtless and the gay.

“ Another very serious evil arising out of them is, that they indispose the mind for the common duties of life. Wherever there is a high relish for amusements, these duties become insipid; they are performed with reluctance as an irksome task; and the person longs for the conclusion of them, that he may betake himself to his joys. Where the mind is not thus perverted in its taste, the ordinary offices of life have pleasure blended with their performance, and this secures a continued attention to them through the whole of life. Whatever, therefore, banishes this pleasure, and converts an agreeable office into a painful drudgery, is an evil of no ordinary magnitude.

“ It becomes you likewise very seriously to consider, that you are accountable for the example which you set before the world. That multitudes of young people, and some of maturer years are involved in utter ruin by these amusements, and lose fortune,

health, and present and future happiness in the pursuit, is too evident to be denied. But should any of them have been initiated in these vanities by your example, and countenanced and emboldened in them by seeing you the patrons and constant visitors at the card table, the assembly, or the theatre, it may not be so easy to exculpate yourself from heinous guilt at the awful tribunal of God, as you now imagine.

“ That persons, who make any pretensions to eminence in piety, keep at the greatest distance from these scenes, and consider them as altogether unsuitable to their condition, you must allow. Nay, you must be sensible that to be seen there does not accord with your ideas of sanctity of character. What would be your sensations, if, on taking up a morning newspaper, you were to read the following paragraph. ‘ Last night the apostle Paul, and the evangelist Timothy were at the assembly. St. Paul played all the evening with two old matrons and a middle aged gentleman at cards. Timothy danced with the young ladies, and charmed them all with his elegance, his wit, and his mirth.’ Would you not be shocked at the intelligence as containing something abhorrent to the ideas which you had formed of those holy men ? But is there more than one rule for the disciples of Christ ? Is there a strict formulary and a lax one designed for different classes of mankind ? No, there is but one, and all should observe it in all its precepts, and you, and I, and every person professing Christianity, should be as good and holy as the apostles and evangelists, as Paul and Timothy were.

“ Not to be tedious, can you bear the idea of death finding you occupied in these amusements. To die while engaged in your business, or in conversing with

your family and friends ; or in walking abroad in the fields ; or in lying down on your couch to rest, has nothing unsuitable to the Christian character : it awakens no painful sensations as if the person had been surprized by death in an improper place. To die at church, or in family devotion, or in the closet at secret prayer, would be considered by you as according well with a Christian's profession, and you would covet it as an honour, and say, " let my last end be like his." But would you like to die at the card table, in the midst of a dance, or in a box at the theatre ? You would not : the idea shocks you. But why ? There must be something wrong, that excites such emotions in your breast. If you shudder at the thoughts of dying in your beloved amusements, it must be more than improper to live in them.

" Consider these hints. I will not press the subject farther. I only say, can you pray for the blessing of God upon them ? You can do it for the exercises of religion ; you can do it for your worldly business ; but can you do it for these amusements ? You cannot. Indulge no longer, my friends, in practices on which you cannot pray for the divine blessing.

" You may think the life of a person, who abstains from your favourite pleasures, dull and gloomy beyond enduring. This judgment, I know, is frequently passed on it by those who know no higher principles than the spirit of the world can infuse. ' How' say they, ' can you, and those who think and act as you do, bear existence ? Melancholy and misery must reside continually in your habitations.' No this is an egregious mistake. It is a poor miserable life that depends for its happiness on cards, and dancing, and plays. After bidding adieu to them all, we have

enough behind for comfort and happiness; the banishing your amusements heightens that felicity. There remain with us the pursuits of literature, the charms of agreeable conversation, the satisfaction and quiet peace arising out of the performance of our every day's duties, the delights of relative affection in domestic intercourse, which are to be reckoned among the sweetest joys of life; delights, which your amusements tend to lessen and destroy; and above all, the still superior pleasures of religious worship and devotion. From these sources we derive our happiness, and these ingredients thrown into the cup of life render it sweet and pleasing to our taste."

To return from this digression. There is one thing more which particularly marks the character of truly religious persons, and that is, the exercise of Christian benevolence. Among the heathens it was almost unknown in every age: but no sooner was the Gospel preached with power than it changed the human heart. Selfish pagans were converted into generous disciples of Christ. They considered both themselves and their substance as the property of God, and their benevolence flowed in copious streams: and it will ever continue to flow in an abundance proportioned to the measure of religion which reigns within the heart.

The benevolence of the dissenters during this period may be inferred from premises satisfactory enough to the candid mind. They had displayed a willingness to part with their substance for the sake of their religious profession in the persecuting reigns of Charles and of James. The persons who had not



hesitated to part with their worldly goods in this way would certainly not afterwards be backward to contribute liberally to the cause of Christ. To become a member of a voluntary religious society is like giving a pledge of benevolence; and it requires and accustoms the members to give with a liberal hand. In this period there were peculiar calls for its existence. Meeting-houses were almost every where to be built: ministers were to be supported, and the wants of the poor to be supplied; besides those occasional applications to liberality, which so frequently occur. So that, in proportion to their substance, there is reason to conclude they will, in the exercise of Christian benevolence, bear a comparison with those of any other denomination.

For the justness of this description of the dissenters the reader is referred to the authority of the venerable Dr. Watts, who was arrived at the years of maturity by the commencement of this period, and who, from what he had himself observed, delineates the character of the nonformists<sup>1</sup>. In the lives of Philip and of Matthew Henry, of George Trosse, of Mrs. Bury, and some others, the reader will find additional confirmation of what has been mentioned above.

As the final result of our investigation of the subject, it may with confidence be asserted, that, in the Christian world during this period, there was not to be found in any sect a body of people who, in proportion to their numbers, excelled the dissenters in England, presbyterians, independents, and baptists, in the knowledge of the principles of the Gospel, in the uniform and persevering practice of its precepts,

<sup>1</sup> Watts's *Humble Attempt*, page 186—239.

and in the diligent and faithful observance of its ordinances.

For the state of religion among the quakers, during this period, the reader is referred to the following extracts from the pages of their own historian, Gough.

Gough, speaking of them, says, "Now a second generation being risen, and arising, amongst this society (*i. e.* quakers) who held the profession as the religion of their education, and not the purchase of giving up all for its sake as their predecessors had done: too many of these appeared in the danger of being carried away with the stream, and being drawn aside by the tempting prospect, into an inordinate pursuit of wealth beyond the limits of a truly religious disposition. Many admonitions and exhortations were sent forth from their meetings of discipline for exhorting their folds to vigilance, and to keep within the limits of pure religion in their temporal engagements, and under the guidance of divine grace, which would teach them to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts. Their zealous endeavours were attended with a good effect<sup>k</sup>."

In the postscript of an epistle addressed to the society, the writer speaks thus:—"As our number increased, it happened that such a spirit came in among us as was amongst the Jews when they came out of Egypt, and thus began to look back into the world and traded with the credit which was not of its own purchasing, and striving to be great in the riches and possessions of this world; and their great fair buildings in city and country, fine and fashionable furniture, and apparel equivalent, with dainty and voluptuous provision, with rich matches in mar-

<sup>k</sup> Gough's History, vol. III. book vi. chap. 12.

riage, far wide from the footsteps of the ministers and elders at the beginning<sup>1</sup>."

Gough, speaking of Ambrose Rigge, of Ryegate, Surry, who died in the year one thousand seven hundred and four, says, "he lived long enough to see, with regret, a declension in some professing the same principles of truth, in turning their attention more to great possessions in this world, to aggrandise themselves and families, than to make their calling and election sure; whereby, some meeting with disappointment in their aim had deviated from that scrupulous regard to moral justice which, in the beginning, remarkably distinguished the members of the society. This drew from him the following epistle to his folds. Many days and months, *yea, some years*, hath my life been oppressed, and my spirit grieved, to see and hear of the uneven walking of many who have a name to live and profess the knowledge of God in words. There are some amongst us who have not walked humbly with the Lord as he hath required, nor kept in that low estate neither inwardly nor outwardly which becometh such who are travelling up to Zion, but have launched from the rock, which is firm and sure, into the great sea of troubles and uncertainty, where some have been drowned, and others hardly escaping, and many yet labouring for the shore with little hopes of coming at it; who have not only brought themselves in danger of suffering shipwreck but have drawn in others, and have endangered them also, which hath opened the mouths of the enemies of Zion to blaspheme his great and glorious name, and hath eclipsed the lustre of the glorious sun of righteousness both in city and country.

<sup>1</sup> Gough's History, vol. III. p. 479.

“These things lay mightily upon me, and I may truly say in the sight of God, I writ them in a great cross to my own will, for I delight not, nay, my soul is bowed down at the occasion of writing such things; but there is no remedy, the name of the Lord has been, and is likely to be, greatly dishonoured if things of this nature be not stopped.”

■ Gough, vol. IV. page 17—19.

## CHAP. VIII.

LIVES OF EMINENT PERSONS AMONG THE  
DISSENTERS.

**T**O descend to posterity with honour, and have a name inscribed in the annals of fame is the earnest desire of multitudes, but the lot comparatively of few. The great mass is soon forgotten, and their memory perishes. An elegant sepulchral monument, though loaded with the praises of the deceased, soon ceases to interest the spectator, and being so common a thing is regarded rather as a proof of the wealth than the virtues of the man.

A good and benevolent tenour of conduct will make a person remembered in his circle during the continuance of that generation. Deeds of public virtue and prowess will be the objects of national applause for the same space. Extraordinary actions which affect the destinies of a kingdom will give a place in the page of history, and secure a lasting remembrance. Such as have been benefactors, not to their own country alone, but to mankind, by the alleviation of human misery, by putting a stop to a general and long continued course of injustice and oppression, and by the introduction of principles calculated to augment the sum of personal and social felicity, will justly possess a wider extent of fame, be celebrated in every country as the friends of man, and descend from age to age with undiminished praise. By those who have attained the first rank in

learning, or written books of superior excellence, a renown as extensive and as durable will be acquired.

While due praise is given to those who have thus immortalized their names, there is a select portion consisting of such as have exhibited a conduct in a very high degree, calculated to promote the honour of God and the spiritual welfare of man; especially of those who, in addition to this, have published invaluable books on subjects of the first importance to the eternal happiness of the human race. The preservation of the names of such men by a record of their lives and writings is rendering a valuable service to the church of God.

Biography is a species of composition recommended to us by the authority and example of the inspired writers who, while engaged in narrating the history of the world, and of the church, insensibly slide into it and exhibit a sketch of the character and conduct of the most eminent saints. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, present each an article of sacred biography from the pen of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, while the life of Christ, and the actions of the apostles, fill the historical part of the New.

With such a pattern before our eyes we should not perform our duty to the cause of religion, and the claims of the dissenters, were we not to give a rapid glance of some of the most eminent persons among them, both in the ministry and in private life. It was, in some instances, difficult to select, and we were under the necessity of omitting names as celebrated as some which we have presented to view. The design is, that the exhibition of so much excel-

lence in persons who have served their generation according to the will of God, may animate those who are in similar situations with a laudable emulation to equal, and if possible, to excel them.

## SECTION I.

### LIVES OF EMINENT MINISTERS.

#### RICHARD BAXTER.

IN the different walks of life, men of a superior mind, from time to time, appear, who powerfully influence the destinies of a portion of the human race to happiness or misery, according to the manner in which their talents are employed. Among these, Richard Baxter holds a conspicuous place. He was born at Rowton, in Shropshire, the twelfth of November, in the year one thousand six hundred and fifteen. His father was of a class of men who are now, from the circumstances of the times, almost disappearing from the country; but the yeomanry was then a numerous, a respectable, and independent body, employed in the cultivation of their paternal fields, and favourably placed below the pride of riches, and above the dependence of poverty. He possessed religion in the midst of profane and impious neighbours; and he sought to inculcate its principles on his son. His literary instruction, he was obliged to commit to other hands, and some of these were but ill qualified for the task; but the genius and application of the youth supplied the deficiency. His father's scanty estate not enabling him to send Richard to the university,

he was placed under private tutors who, however, performed their duty in a very imperfect manner. His improvement was chiefly owing to his own ingenuity, and his vigorous and persevering application.

At the age of eighteen he was sent up to Whitehall to learn to be a courtier; and had he pursued that course of life, his extraordinary talents would have raised him to distinction, and made him a blessing to his country, or a curse. But the manners of a court did not suit his taste, and he soon returned to the country and his former pursuits. From childhood his mind had been impressed with a sense of the importance of the salvation of his immortal soul. In his fourteenth year, by reading a book, entitled "Parsons on Resolution," his soul received an impression of divine things which it never afterwards lost. A feeble body, and an infirm state of health, brought eternity near, and gave him the serious thoughts and lively views of a dying man. In this frame he read the greater part of the writings of the English puritans with the concern and feelings of an immortal being, anxious for the security of his happiness in a future state. So that, before he had studied theology doctrinally, and as a science, he was intimately acquainted with the best experimental and practical writers, whose works he had read for his edification as a Christian.

When he reached the age of twenty-one he conceived that he had but a year or two to live, and wishing, during that short space, to be as useful as possible, he took orders from the bishop of Worcester, without being much acquainted with the controversy on ecclesiastical government and discipline. He received a license to keep a school at Dudley, and



preached there for nine months with great acceptance and success. He then removed to Bridgnorth to be an assistant to an aged minister, as he could, in that place, be free from some things which he scrupled in the church service. At first there was some fruit of his labours, but afterwards they appeared to be without effect ; though he was then in the ardour of youth, and in the highest fervour of his zeal. God will teach his servants that their success proceeds from him alone, that they may learn to depend constantly on him for his blessing, and may labour under an unceasing consciousness, " that Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God giveth the increase."

After continuing there for some time, he received an invitation from the inhabitants of Kidderminster to go and preach the Gospel in that place. Their vicar and his two curates had been accused by them as unqualified for their office, and dreading the wrath of the parliament, in order to prevent a trial which he had reason to dread, he consented to allow a maintenance to an acceptable preacher.

This new field was overgrown with briars and thorns. Ignorance and profaneness reigned triumphant in the place. His labours among the people, both in public and private, were most abundant. In family and personal instruction of his people, England, probably, did not, at that time, produce his equal. " His Gildas Salvianus" exemplifies his own practice ; and taught many others to follow it. His success was uncommon, perhaps superior to that of any other minister in the land. When he went to Kidderminster there was scarcely a house in a street where there was family worship ; when he left it, there was scarcely a family in the side of a street where it was

not : and whoever walked through the town on the Lord's-day evening, heard every where the delightful sound of reading the Scriptures, and prayer, and praise. A general reformation took place ; and sobriety, order, harmony, and devotion succeeded to intemperance, riot, quarrels, and impiety.

Mr. Baxter's residence at Kidderminster was, after two years, interrupted by the civil war. Whatever bore the semblance of real religion, was an object of hatred by the royal army ; and almost every minister who went beyond the forms of the establishment, and was zealous for the salvation of the souls of men, was sure to feel their cruel rage. His house was plundered, his person was injured, and his family treated in the most barbarous manner, by a brutal and unprincipled rabble, who with little discipline and no pay, were allowed to find their support by pillaging the property of those whom they considered to be unfriendly to Charles's cause.

To avoid their fury, of which he would have felt a double portion, Mr. Baxter was prevailed on to retire to Coventry, which was then garrisoned by the parliament, where he found thirty ministers who had sought refuge there for the same cause. For two years he preached to the garrison, and to the inhabitants, and then went into the army with a view to put a stop to the errors which began to prevail, and was appointed chaplain to Whalley's dragoons. After following the camp for some time, and with the prospect of success, an alarming and dangerous illness obliged him to leave it ; and when he was recovered, conceiving his longer continuance would be of no avail, he returned to Kidderminster, and remained there for the space of fourteen years.

The restoration banished him for ever from his beloved flock. At the beginning of the civil wars, England groaned under the heavy curse of a multitude of clergy, both ignorant and irreligious ; men who had neither abilities nor a disposition to promote the ends of their office. Such was the old vicar of Kidderminster. The parliament laid him and hundreds more aside, with a pension for their support. But, at the restoration, they were all let loose upon their unhappy flocks, and resumed their former stations. From this circumstance, Mr. Baxter was compelled to resign his charge to the old incumbent. He would gladly have become his curate, but bishop Morley would not allow him to preach there, or in any part of his diocese : and when Mr. Baxter intreated liberty to officiate in some village which had no endowment, the bishop replied, " they had better be without any, than have you to preach to them." Morley has since answered for that speech, and for the rest of his conduct, to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. The two years of remaining liberty, after the restoration, Mr. Baxter was therefore obliged to spend in London, where his stated and occasional labours proved a blessing to the inhabitants of that highly favoured city.

The act of uniformity separated him from the church of England. Soon after his ordination, scruples began to arise in his mind respecting some of the rites required in the established worship ; and his objections increased in proportion as he investigated the subject. A latitude in all these things had been promised by Charles in his declaration from Breda ; but it was not adhered to. Integrity appears to have had no place in that monarch's heart ; and it formed

no part of his character. The conferences at the Savoy, in which Mr. Baxter took a principal part, were for show, and to amuse ; but not intended for any real purpose of accommodation : and the terms of conformity were made more rigorous than before. A bishopric was offered to him, but he would not accept it. When the fatal Bartholomew act was passed, he quitted his connection with the established church, and became a nonconformist.

During the severest part of the reign of terror, he lived at Acton, and embraced every opportunity of preaching to many or to few, as circumstances would permit. When an indulgence was given, he came to London, and officiated wherever he could obtain leave, preaching stately or occasionally to the utmost of his power. Like his brethren he had his share of persecution, and indeed one of the largest shares. Repeated vexations, fines, imprisonments, and loss of goods, fell to his lot ; and one of his imprisonments lasted near two years.

The revolution gave him the liveliest joy ; but his strength for labour was almost gone. To have prevented him, and a multitude besides of the most skilful and zealous ministers, from labouring while they had ability, was a crime of so deep a dye, that though the authors of it wore crowns and mitres, they would find it no easy task to answer to God, the Judge of all, for the millions of precious souls which perished for lack of knowledge, from being deprived of their pastoral care. As long as Mr. Baxter had health to enable him to appear in public, he assisted Mr. Sylvester at his meeting in Blackfriars : and when his infirmities rendered him unable to go abroad, he received all who would come to his own

hired house, and attend on his family worship. At last, worn out with weakness and affliction, he finished his course on the eighth of December, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

In his person, Richard Baxter was tall and thin ; and his countenance was remarkably expressive. His talents were of the first rank. A mind acute, penetrating in the highest degree, comprehensive in its researches and its views, and inventive on every occasion ; a judgment sound and impartial ; an imagination lively and prompt ; and affections ardent and tender, were all united in him in no ordinary degree. Ample stores of knowledge, acquired by the most laborious study, furnished him with materials for every subject which he was called to investigate. Though he never was at an university, not one in an hundred thousand of those who perform all its exercises, and are decorated with all its degrees of honour, will be found his superior, or his equal.

Some men, possessed of all his talents, have passed through life with little notice. When they have chosen to appear on any occasional subject, they met with the highest praise : but from indolence and impatience of labour they spent almost all their days in silence. But in Richard Baxter, to talents was united an energy of character which has seldom been surpassed. By it, his mighty powers were brought into action, and kept in action during the whole course of his life. In the performance of important duty he was constantly employed ; and by preaching, by writing, by conversation, by counsel, and by active labours, was one of the nearest followers of him " who went about doing good." The age, in which he lived, was

an age of storms, of violence, of oppression, and persecution ; but his soul was equal to the times : he shrunk from no service however self-denying, from no suffering however painful, but persevered in the path of duty to the end of his days.

He was justly accounted one of the greatest writers of his age. His publications mark the energy of his character ; and they are all works of business calculated and designed to do good. The quantity is so astonishing, that it would be the employment of an ordinary mans life only to copy them. Dr. Calamy, in the list which closes his memoirs of Baxter, enumerates four folios, fifty-eight quartos besides single sermons, forty-six octavos, and twenty-nine duodecimos, with occasional sheets and prefaces to other men's books : and yet composition never took him off from preaching, and the other active parts of the pastoral care.

His controversial pieces were numerous. In the former part of his life, emancipation from the shackles of high church tyranny, made persons eager to enjoy their new privilege, and produced a flood of new opinions and erroneous ideas. Good men were alarmed at the novel sight, and trembled for the consequences. Among others, Mr. Baxter dreaded an immensity of evils, and set himself to expose their errors, and refute their systems. His ability in performing the task, all acknowledge ; but sometimes he laboured under a disease common to human nature ;--- in his anxiety to avoid one extreme, he was in danger of running into the other. His metaphysical head was so subtle in its distinctions and definitions, that his opponents frequently mistook his meaning, and charged him with heresy in turn. Sometimes

he grew angry, and carried matters to an extreme; sometimes he was in haste, and did not take sufficient pains to investigate the subject, or to present it in the most eligible form; and sometimes he attempted to reconcile systems which cannot be reconciled. On these accounts, his volumes on theological controversy, are in the least estimation of any of his writings.

His doctrinal and practical works, which are much more valuable, display his mighty talents to great advantage. From the causes just mentioned, his controversial writings frightened many good people, and they cried out, "a heretic." But here we find every principle of evangelical religion stated with precision, illustrated with cordial delight, confirmed by powerful arguments, and pressed home on the conscience with a pungency and force which were eminently his own. The accusations brought against his orthodoxy, will here be found utterly destitute of foundation.

In devotional compositions, he peculiarly excelled. There is a keen edge on his thoughts; and his simple unadorned language presents ideas flowing from a soul burning with the most ardent love to God and man: the soul of the reader is penetrated with the divine eloquence, and his affections raised to heaven. There are parts in his "Saints' Rest," in his "Reformed Pastor," in his "Dying Thoughts," and in the applications of his sermons, to which it will not be easy to find any thing of the kind superior in the English tongue.

Had Mr. Baxter published but an eighth part of what he did, and taken pains to render every piece as perfect as he could, they would have been an invaluable

able treasure to the religious public. This, he says in his memoirs, would have been better. But on taking all circumstances into consideration, though many of the treatises were so hastily written, that he had not leisure to look over the manuscript before it was sent to the press, yet they were called for by the necessities of the times, and answered a valuable end at the hour of publication; and he therefore delivers it as his deliberate judgment, that it is best that they should be as they are.

His labours among his flock, and his intercourse with his brethren present additional proofs of his superiority of character. The reformation he wrought in Kidderminster, was such as scarcely another town in England could display. For more than a century after his removal, the fruits of his zeal remained. If at the present time they just cease to be visible, woe to the men who extinguish the light; but to Baxter what praise is due!

Among his brethren in the ministry around him, he acquired a beneficial ascendancy, and collected them into an association for the advancement of religion, which was highly profitable both to them and to their flocks. Being himself moderate in respect to forms of church government, he prevailed on his neighbours, episcopalians, presbyterians, independents, and baptists, to unite with him in associating for the advancement of piety and the exercise of discipline, on the general principles in which they all agreed: and from his influence every thing was conducted with harmony and love. The ascendancy which he acquired, and which he used only for good, was cheerfully borne because it was not the unnatural exaltation of ignorance over knowledge, or folly over



wisdom, but that which results from superior talents and more ardent zeal.

When civil and ecclesiastical tyranny forced him from the country to London, and he mingled with the first characters there, his pre-eminence was still maintained. Manton, Bates, Howe, all appear to have looked up to him as their superior; and express that veneration for him which could not have been produced but by qualities both of mind and heart, of an extraordinary kind. Indeed it may be truly said that he was the first man among the nonconformists, and drew the greatest respect, and had the most extensive influence of any individual in England. He was one of those uncommon persons who are born to bear sway in their circle, not by coercion or intrigue, nor by authoritative claims of domination, but by pre-eminence of intellect and goodness, and the natural unresisted, and legitimate influence of these over the minds of men.

But that has been left to the last place, which was the main spring of all the others, namely, his exalted piety. It appeared early in life; it grew with his growth, and advanced with his years. It was daily fed by the sacred Scriptures, by meditation, and prayer. It gathered energy from frequent and almost habitual infirmities; it was strengthened by suffering and persecution; and it enabled and disposed him to live "as seeing him who is invisible, and having respect to the recompence of reward." It gave an energy to his preaching, a pathos to his writings, and success to all his labours.

A striking instance of its power was displayed when he was preaching at St. Dunstan's. Some of the plaister falling down from the ceiling, the congre-

gation was alarmed, and hurried out of the church in confusion and terror. He sat down undismayed; and when the tumult had subsided, he rose up, and calmly addressed them thus: "we are in the service of God to prepare ourselves, that we may be fearless at the great noise of the dissolving world, when the heavens shall pass away, and the elements melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." The close of his life was that of an eminent saint. Amidst the sharpest pains, when he was praying for relief, he would check himself and say, "it is not fit for me to prescribe; Lord, when thou wilt; what thou wilt; how thou wilt." As his end drew near, being asked by a friend what was the state of his mind, he replied, "I bless God I have a well grounded assurance of my eternal happiness, and great peace and comfort within." When death had dismissed his soul into the joy of his Lord, the general esteem in which he was held, appeared from the numerous company of persons of different ranks and stations who attended to perform the last office of respect<sup>a</sup>.

### JOHN FLAVEL.

This eminent divine is said to have descended from the third great officer who came over with William the conqueror. But he had nobler ancestors, His father, Mr. Richard Flavel, was a Christian so eminent, that those who were familiarly acquainted

<sup>a</sup> Dr. Earle, then a young man, who was a spectator of the funeral, said, that the coaches with the mourners reached all the way from Merchant-Tailor's-hall, whence the procession began, to Christ church where the body was interred.

with him declared, they never heard one vain word from his lips; and a minister so honoured by his Lord, that he was allowed to bear the cross after him, and suffer the loss of all things for his name's sake. When he was cast out of his living in Gloucestershire, at the restoration, he took refuge with his son, the subject of this memoir, and just before the ejection of the nonconformists preached on Hosea vii. 9:—"the days of visitation are come; the days of recompense are come: Israel shall know it." For his close and faithful application he was seized and taken before the magistrates. He afterwards exercised his ministry in London, where he was imprisoned during the time of the plague, of which he died.

John Flavel, his eldest son, was born in Worcestershire. One of those auspicious omens which are frequently supposed to announce future eminence accompanied his birth. A pair of nightingales made their nest close to the window of the chamber where his mother lay-in, and with their delicious notes sang the birth of him whose tongue sweetly proclaimed the glad tidings which "give songs in the night." He early displayed the happy effects of his pious education, and having made eminent advances in classical learning, he was entered a commoner in University-college, Oxford.

His first situation in the ministry was that of rector of Deptford, in Devon, where he took a generous method of relieving himself of the care, and his ministry of the obstruction arising from the Jewish system of tithes. He afterwards gave another proof of his self-denial, and superiority to filthy lucre, by removing to the sea port of Dartmouth, where, though his living was inferior in value, his sphere of

usefulness was greatly enlarged. Here he laboured with distinguished success. One of his judicious hearers says of him, "I could say much, though not enough of the excellence of his preaching; and that person must have a very soft head, or a very hard heart, or both, that could sit under his ministry unaffected."

After the act of uniformity had deprived him of the legal title and temporal support, he still retained his relation of pastor to the flock at Dartmouth; for, judging their souls too precious to be tamely abandoned at the nod of power, he preached and administered the ordinances of religion to them in private. But when the Oxford act banished him and his brethren five miles from any corporation, he was compelled to leave Dartmouth, to the excessive grief of his flock, who followed him to a short distance from the town, where they parted with floods of bitter tears. He then preached at the family seat of the Rolles, about five miles from Dartmouth, confining his labours at first to the solemn hour of midnight, when the great hall of the mansion was crowded by those who hungered after the Gospel, and preferred it to their midnight slumbers. He afterwards preached every Lord's-day to those of his charge who came out of Dartmouth to him, and sometimes slipped into the town to exhort and animate others. He often narrowly escaped his enemies, but especially on one occasion when preaching in a wood near Exeter.

Availing himself afterwards of king Charles's indulgence, he preached openly at Dartmouth. But when the fires of persecution were re-kindled, he went to London by sea, being rescued from a tre-

mendous storm, in answer to prayer, of which deliverance he had a remarkable premonition. In London he was snatched from the more dangerous floods of ungodly men and persecutors in a distinguishing manner; and as he resisted the pressing invitations which were given him to settle in that city, he returned to Dartmouth. Here, when James the second relieved the dissenters from the oppression of the penal laws, his flock erected for him what may be called a large place of worship. But the edifices which were reared for the most eminent of the nonconformist pastors oppose the vulgar notion of the superior usefulness of good men who labour in an establishment; for it is evident that only a small proportion of the parish had learned to love Christ above all, while the vast majority were contented to hear those wretched hirelings by whom the ejected ministers were too often succeeded.

When the calmness of the times permitted him to reside at home, and attend to his charge, he quietly walked with God as on the borders of heaven. In the account of his personal religion, which his diary contains, we have a window opened through which we see the habitation of God in the soul of man. In prayer he scarcely ever used the same expression twice, and always seemed to exceed himself. His treatise on the Soul of Man contains a remarkable anecdote of a minister, which is usually supposed to be a modest imitation of the apostle Paul who related his own exalted honour, and delights in the third person. From this relation it appears that Mr. Flavel spent a day in such intercourse with heaven, as overwhelmed the powers of nature, and seemed, for a time, to bring him to the verge of the grave.

Many years after he used to call that one of the days of heaven, and declared he learned from it more of the heavenly life than from any books or discourses. His usefulness was great, and in some instances very remarkable. He was called one Lord's-day morning to attend a young man who was on board a ship from Poole, who had cut his own throat, and stabbed himself in such a manner, that his recovery was thought impossible. But his almost miraculous recovery gave him an opportunity of shewing that Mr. Flavel's attention had been the means of rescuing his soul from the hell into which he had attempted to plunge himself. Mr. Flavel's bookseller once gave him a delightful account of the conversion of a gentleman from dreadful profaneness by reading his treatise, "on the Keeping of the Heart." But to do good and receive evil are the sure characteristics of the genuine disciples of him who died for his enemies. While Mr. Flavel was engaged in a season of peculiar devotion, interceding for the inhabitants of Dartmouth, some of them, headed by the magistrates, who were themselves, says Grainger, the lowest of mankind, carried through the town the effigy of Mr. Flavel, to which was fastened the bill of, exclusion, and the covenant. At length they committed the whole apparatus to the flames amidst the shouts and curses of the profane, and the secret sighs of the friends of Flavel and religion. When the good man was told what had happened, he only replied, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

But he now hastened towards that happier world where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. His last sermon was a very ani-

mated discourse at Ashburton, on his way to Exeter, whither he afterwards went and presided as moderator at a meeting of the dissenting ministers of Devon, convened in order to form an union of presbyterians and independents. At the completion of this work, on which he had set his heart, he appeared to pour forth all the remaining energies of his soul in the most exalted strains of prayer and praise. On the same evening he was seized after supper with a paralytic stroke, of which he died on the twenty-sixth day of June, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Though his funeral displayed the high esteem in which he was held, bigotry pursued him beyond the grave; for the Latin epitaph on a brass plate, which was first in the parish church of Dartmouth, was taken down by order of the magistrates. It was then transferred to the meeting-house, its proper place; but his true record is on high, and will survive the conflagration of the globe.

Of Mr. Flavel's learning, his works contain sufficient evidence; and his printed sermons, which are a model for preachers in the present day, prove him to have been master of that species of eloquence which reigns over the heart. Without any remarkable stretch of thought, his ardent evangelical affections give to his works a deserved pre-eminence in the esteem of the wise and pious\*.

#### WILLIAM BATES, D. D.

Dr. William Bates was born in November, in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-eight, of a

\* See his life prefixed to his works in two volumes, folio.

father who was an eminent physician. Having received his education at the university of Cambridge, he obtained the degree of bachelor of arts in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-seven, and thirteen years after, that of doctor in divinity. The act of uniformity deprived him of the valuable living of St. Dunstan's in the West, though he might have been promoted to a deanery, and from thence to a bishoprick in the establishment, if he had chosen to abandon his principles. But in lovely union with that mildness and candour which breathe in his writings, he displayed heroic firmness on this trying occasion. In his farewell sermon to his parishioners, August the seventeenth, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two, he says, "I know you expect I should say something concerning my nonconformity. I shall only say thus much: it is neither fancy, faction, nor humour which makes me not comply, but merely the fear of offending God.

He afterwards became pastor of a congregation at Hackney, near London, and was, for many years, one of the Tuesday lecturers at Salter's-hall in that city, where his popular talents drew immense crowds. On the accession of William to the throne of Britain, Dr. Bates presented to him an address of congratulation from the dissenting ministers of London and its vicinity, and delivered two speeches, the first to the king, the other to queen Mary. They both bear evident marks of Dr. Bates's elegant mind. Congratulating his majesty on the facility and quiet with which he had effected his arduous enterprize; the address observes, if the "deliverance had been obtained by fierce and bloody battles, victory itself had been dejected and sad, and our joy had been mixed with



afflicting bitterness. But as the sun ascending the horizon dispels without noise the darkness of the night, so your serene presence has, without tumults or disorder, chased away the darkness which invaded us. We are encouraged by your gracious promise humbly to desire and hope, that your majesty will be pleased, by your wisdom and authority, to establish a firm union of your protestant subjects in matters of religion by making the rule of Christianity to be the rule of conformity. We do assure your majesty that we shall cordially embrace the terms of union which the ruling wisdom of our Saviour has prescribed in his word."

On the death of queen Mary Dr. Bates performed a less welcome duty in preaching a funeral sermon for her majesty, and presenting to the afflicted king the address of condolence from the dissenters which stands among his works as the production of his pen. Hence it was observed by Mr. Howe, that "his concern lay not only with mean men (though he knew how to condescend to the meanest), he was to stand before kings. It is well known in what relation he stood to one as long as was convenient for certain purposes (for he was at the restoration nominated chaplain to Charles the second); and how frequent occasions he had of appearing, never unacceptably, before another, William, whose queen made his writings the companions of her closet." Many also of the most distinguished persons in the kingdom cultivated his friendship, among whom archbishop Tillotson is particularly mentioned.

Towards the close of life he seems to have laboured under the disadvantages of weakness and ill health; for, twelve years before his death, he commenced his

admirable funeral sermon for Dr. Jacomb thus: "O frail and faithless life of man! Who would have thought that Dr. Jacomb, whose natural vigour and firm complexion promised a longer continuance here, should have a period put to his days, and that I should survive, whose life has been preserved for many years, like the weak light of a lamp in the open air." He lived, however, to the good old age of seventy-four, when he departed on the fourteenth day of July, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-nine.

Mr. Howe, who was then at the distance of two hundred miles, was called to London to preach his funeral sermon, which is in the best style of that great man, and is dedicated to the duke of Bedford, on account of the high esteem which he entertained for Dr. Bates. Unhappily Mr. Howe gives no biography of his friend, with whom he had been acquainted forty years. He has, however, furnished us with an admirable portrait of the man. "A handsome and commanding person was adorned with the charms of elegant manners, which gave him a kind of natural claim to the elevated society among whom he was often welcomed. He united, in an eminent degree, the venerable with the lovely; so that to him may be applied his own words concerning alderman Ashurst: a constant serenity reigned in his countenance, a visible sign of the divine calm in his breast, the peace of God which passeth all understanding. His memory, which suffered no apparent decay till the advanced age of seventy-four, was so vigorous that when he had delivered an elegant speech without having penned a word, he could afterwards repeat it to his friends verbatim. His sermons,

which are neither short nor unstudied, he delivered from memory, to which he said he was, in some measure, induced by the hope of alluring young preachers to avoid the chilling use of notes." He has combined the acute perceptions of a metaphysician and the sound judgment of a grave divine with the glowing imagination of a poet. His eloquence, which, like that of the ancient classics, has not become antiquated by the lapse of more than a century, must, to his cotemporaries, have been singularly fascinating. But from the same cause his style now glides over the mind with the smoothness of the moderns, rather than rouses with the rude energy of the old puritans. In a day which presented many extraordinary examples of successful labour in almost every department of knowledge, the learning of Dr. Bates was pre-eminent. Such was his acquaintance with books that Mr. Howe pronounces him a living library, and adds, that one who was as great a pillar, and as bright an ornament to the church as ever it had, was known to say, that were he to collect a library he would as soon consult Dr. Bates as any man he knew. These costly talents were humbly consecrated on the altar of God, for his exalted piety turned every thing he touched, into religion. Persons of high rank, who often consulted him, acknowledged that they received from him such serious hints as require a rare union of talents and religion to convey to the great. "Into what transports of admiration of the love of God have I seen him break forth (says Mr. Howe) when some things, not immediately relating to practical godliness, had taken up great part of his time! How easy a step did he make it from earth to heaven! With what high flights of thought and affection was

wont to speak of the heavenly state! Like a man much more akin to the other world than this. Let those who often visited him say whether he did not usually send them away with somewhat that tended to better their spirits, and quicken them in their way heavenwards." For the elegance of his mind, and the gentleness of his temper, for the manner in which he was regarded, both by his own and the opposite party, Dr. Bates may be called the dissenting Melancthon\*.

### PHILIP HENRY, A. M.

Philip Henry was so pre-eminent in worth that it would have been high honour to any man to have been his son, but he was blessed with such a son that posterity reveres him as the father of Matthew Henry.

The family came from Wales, and the first of them who settled in England was John Henry, who became servant to Charles the first, and was much esteemed for his fidelity to that unhappy monarch. He married Mrs. Margaret Rochdale, of Westminster, a woman of eminent piety, by whom he had the son who is the subject of this memoir. He was named after Philip earl of Pembroke, his sponsor in baptism. Charles the second, and his brother the duke of York, were the playmates of his boyish days; but though they promised him great preferment, they were the scourges of his maturer years. While Mr. Henry related these juvenile occurrences he was so

\* See Howe's Funeral Sermon for Dr. Bates. The Nonconformists' Memorial.

far from priding himself on them, that he adored the kind providence which snatched him from the pollutions of a court. His friends, however, attributed to these early connections the elegant polish which shone in all his future deportment.

He received his education under the happiest auspices, for he was placed at Westminster school, and committed to the care of Mr. Thomas Vincent, who gave himself so heartily to the improvement of his scholars, that it threw him into a consumption, and thus Mr. Henry was accustomed to say, that he killed himself with false Latin. The celebrated Dr. Busby was afterwards his tutor, under whom he became eminent for his attainments in languages. This king of Lilliput, who is said to have ruled by the ferula, seems to have governed young Henry with love; for he says, "I never felt the weight of his hand but once, and then I deserved it." When Mr. Henry was ejected from the establishment, the doctor meeting him, said, "Who made you a nonconformist?" "You, sir," replied he. "I made you a nonconformist!" "Yes, sir, you taught me those principles which forbade me to violate my conscience." While at this school, in compliance with the request of his mother, he was allowed to attend the ministry of Mr. Marshall, who then preached in Westminster, at seven o'clock in the morning, by whose ministry Mr. Henry learned to sit as a disciple at the feet of Jesus.

From Westminster he removed to Christ church, Oxford, where he was soon after called to yield to the parliamentary visitation, which he did in these words: "I submit to the power of the parliament in the present visitation, as far as I may with a safe con-

science, and without perjury." At college, however, finding most learning where there was least religion, his literary ardour betrayed him into evil connexions, and gave occasion for this memorandum, "*Elanguescere mox cæpit pristince pietatis ardor.*" But he adored God that his grace rescued him by a second conversion. Dr. Owen, when vice-chancellor, noticed his college exercises with high approbation; and those who had seen him figure among academics, were afterwards charmed to see with what simplicity he stooped to preach to rustics. Some of his Latin verses are among the poems which the university published in the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-four on the peace with Holland. But when he afterwards visited Oxford he inserted in his book, as no doubt God did in his, "a Tear dropped over my University Sins."

He was first settled at Worthenbury, in Flintshire, where he was ordained by presbyters, and laboured with such holy ardour that through all the country he was known by the name of heavenly Henry. Here he married Catharine Matthews, of Broad Oak. She was heiress to a good estate, which promoted the temporal comfort of her husband, and enabled him not only to preach the Gospel freely but also to relieve many ministers in the day of persecution, while the personal excellencies of his wife were with him a constant theme of praise to God. By her he had two sons, John and Matthew, and four daughters. John died young, but his son Matthew, whose praise is in all the churches, was his father's biographer, and records, with interesting and instructive minuteness, the beautiful order of religion which was established in his paternal abode.

At the restoration Mr. Philip Henry was first deprived, by his enemies, of his usual sphere of labour, and afterwards entirely expelled from the establishment by the act of uniformity. He says "our sins have made Bartholomew-day, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two, the saddest day for England since the death of king Edward the sixth, but even this for good." Though his son Matthew says, "we see not how;" *we* have lived long enough to see how. He was hunted from his home into prisons and corners by the conventicle and five-mile acts. He was at first very scrupulous of preaching out of the establishment, for which he retained a strong predilection; so that when the indulgence was granted in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-two he hesitated to use it, observing, that none but the independents were very glad of it: and he feared to turn independent in practice by setting up a separate meeting. But the further discipline of the rod of persecution afterwards taught him more just sentiments concerning establishments, dissent, and practical independency. Hence, when a new scene opened upon dissenters in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-seven, by king James' declaration for liberty of conscience, Mr. Henry immediately availed himself of it, answering the scrupulous objections of those who feared that it was only designed to favour the papists, by observing, that to preach the Gospel of Christ was to outshoot the papists with their own bow.

In the new commission for the county of Flint he was surprised to find himself nominated a justice of the peace. But though a reverend gentleman of the

neighbourhood had before told him that he hoped himself shortly to be in the commission, and then he would rid the country of him, Mr. Henry refused the opportunity of revenging or defending himself by the proffered honour. He now fitted up an out-building of his own, and held constant worship there, preaching like one who had renewed his youth like the eagle, and soaring as one glad to burst from a chain which had long depressed his heavenward flight. He preached around the country on the working days, riding, after having delivered one sermon, six or eight miles to preach another; and the next, repeating the same laborious exercise: the joy which he felt in this opportunity for labour, the success which attended his efforts, and the happy settlement of all his children, crowned his latter end with gladness.

But his labours hastened his rest, for now writing to a friend, who anxiously inquired after his health, he says, "I am always habitually weary, and expect no other till I lie down in the bed of spices." After preaching on the Lord's-day with his usual vivacity and energy, he was seized on the following Tuesday with the fatal sickness. When Mr. Matthew Henry arrived from Chester, he said to him, "O, son, you are welcome to a dying father, I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." Some time after, while his son supported the head of the dying parent, he said to him, "Son, the Lord bless you, and grant that you may do worthily in your generation, and be more serviceable to the church of God than I have been." He then said, "O death, where is thy sting;" and after sixteen hours illness he slept in Jesus, June the twenty-



fourth, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-six, having lived sixty-five years, and preached forty-three. His character, if drawn to the full, would, to most readers, appear that of an angel, not of a man; and his sayings, which form a chapter in his biography, remind us of the sacred text, "the words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened in a sure place<sup>p</sup>."

### JOHN HOWE, A. M.

Loughborough, of which his father was minister, was the native place of this great man, who was born in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty. Archbishop Laud, whose zeal for the ceremonies of the church was hot as the fire of hell, drove him from his living because he took part with the puritans. Finding no place of rest within the limits of that prelate's ecclesiastical tyranny he went over to Ireland, and carried his son with him. The war and massacre in that unhappy country forced him back again into England, and he settled in Lancashire. There his son acquired his classical knowledge, and was sent early to Cambridge. After continuing some years in that university, and taking his first degree, he removed to Oxford, where he made considerable progress in literature, commenced master of arts, and was elected fellow of Magdalen college.

Soon after taking his second degree he was ordained by Mr. Herle, of Winwick, assisted by the ministers of the chapels in his very extensive parish. On this account he used pleasantly to observe, that

<sup>p</sup> See Life of P. Henry by his son Matthew.

few men in modern times had a more primitive ordination than himself. The field of ministerial labour to which he afterwards removed was Great Torrington, in Devon, and his abundant services were crowned with considerable success.

Business calling him to London he had the curiosity to go to the chapel at Whitehall. Cromwell, whose eyes were every where, thought that he saw something extraordinary in this country minister, and sent a person to say that he wished to speak with him when the service was over. When Mr. Howe came, he was requested, with much earnestness, to preach there the next Lord's-day. He did every thing he could to be excused, and begged to be permitted to return home to his flock, but in vain. He was constrained to comply with the wishes of one who would take no denial. After officiating one Sabbath, he was obliged to do so a second and a third; and the consequence was, that nothing would satisfy the protector but Mr. Howe must come to Whitehall, and be his domestic chaplain. With very great reluctance he was compelled to gratify a man who would have his own way.

His conduct in this difficult situation was that of an eminently wise and prudent, and good man. Such was his disinterestedness that once when he was applying for a favour, the protector said, "Mr. Howe, you often come to me in behalf of others, but you never have asked one benefit for your own family: how comes it that you do not rather seek to advance their interest?" At one time he gave great offence by preaching against a favourite notion, "the efficacy of a particular faith in prayer," which was then in great vogue at court. But he was a man of

unalterable fidelity, and nothing could move him from the path of duty.

After Oliver's death, he continued about three months in the service of his son Richard, and then went down to his old people at Torrington, and laboured among them till the act of uniformity took place. Soon after the restoration he was accused by one of those time-serving men with whom every country abounds, but whom none but bad governments encourage, of having uttered something seditious, if not treasonable, in his sermon: but by the testimony of more than twenty of his most judicious hearers he was cleared from the malicious charge.

Nothing, however, could free him from the effects of the Bartholomew act, and he retired from the station of a parish minister to be a silenced nonconformist. He must now steal opportunities of usefulness, and preach the Gospel in secret, as if he were a thief, offending God, and injuring man. For several years he was an itinerant preacher in the habitations of his friends. In the course of the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-five he endured an imprisonment of two months in the Isle of St. Nicholas. When released, he continued in the west, exercising his ministry from place to place as times would allow.

Seeing no prospect of extensive usefulness at home, he accepted an offer from lord Mazarene to be his chaplain, and went over with his family to Ireland in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-one. The mansion of his patron was in the neighbourhood of Antrim. The demon of uniformity does not appear to have obtained so full a possession of the Irish as of the English bishops of

that age ; and Mr. Howe, while he continued in that country, steadily officiated in the church of that city, and was admitted into the churches in the neighbouring towns.

From this situation he was, in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-five, on the death of Dr. Lazarus Seaman, called to be pastor of a church formed of persons who had belonged to his congregation ; and he returned to London to exercise the office of the ministry, but in a state of things how changed since the time of his former abode in the metropolis, and to an audience how different from that which he had served before. For ten years, and some of them peculiarly unfavourable to religious liberty, he laboured with extraordinary acceptance in the service of his people, among whom were not a few eminently distinguished, not only for their piety but their talents, their education, and their respectability in social life.

In the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-five, when tyranny was come to its height, he complied with an invitation from lord Wharton to travel with him to the Continent ; and after visiting many foreign parts, as the door was still shut against public usefulness at home, he took up his residence at Utrecht, and continued there for a season, greatly respected by all ranks of people, preaching statedly at his own house, and frequently in the English church.

In the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-seven, when king James changed his maxims of government, and gave the dissenters full liberty of worship, Mr. Howe returned with pleasure to his flock, and took the benefit of the indulgence. In an

interview with the prince of Orange, just before his departure from Holland, he had been advised not to thank king James for dispensing with the penal laws; and he, and a great majority of the dissenters, complied with the advice<sup>1</sup>.

After the revolution Mr. Howe continued to labour among his people in Silver-street, who are said to have been a society peculiarly select. He took an active part in every thing relating to the concerns of religion, and ever appeared the powerful advocate of truth, of piety, of moderation, and liberality. In every part of his conduct his entire devotedness to the service of his Master shone forth; and in the end he exhibited a resemblance of the sun in a summer evening setting in mildness of glory. He died the second day of April, in the year one thousand seven hundred and five, in the seventy-fifth year of his age.

Mr. Howe's person was the index of his mind. He was above the common size: there was a dignity in his countenance, and something unusually great and venerable in his whole deportment, which struck even strangers with reverence. His talents were of the highest order. The God of nature endued him

<sup>1</sup> There were some who sent up addresses expressive of gratitude for the liberty which he gave them to worship God according to their conscience; and they have been greatly blamed, both by those of their own communion and of the established church, but without sufficient reason. If the parliament of England was so infernally wicked as to persecute men for worshipping God in the way they conceived agreeable to his will, when the king set himself in opposition to their abominable iniquity, and said to the dissenters, "Go worship God as conscience dictates," was it not a good deed? And he deserved the thanks of every friend both of God and man.

with a soul capable of the most vigorous exertions, and the most exalted degrees of improvement. The capacities which he possessed he did not suffer, through inglorious indolence, to remain inert. His application to study was close and unremitting; and his faculties were roused with their utmost energies in order to attain every branch of knowledge which could conduce to improve and aid the researches and pursuits of a divine.

His sentiments, in theological matters, were such as would lead men to call him a moderate calvinist. In his writings he scarcely descended to the minuter parts of divinity; but chiefly confined his literary labours to the great and fundamental principles of religion, and set himself to illustrate those important truths in which Christians are agreed. The manner in which he formed his creed, is not unworthy of notice. By his skill in languages he was able to examine with accuracy the originals of the sacred code. He perused the writings of some of the fathers and of the schoolmen. He made himself master of the systems of theology drawn up by the reformers and the divines of the following age. He formed an intimate acquaintance with the works of the heathen philosophers. Above all, he studied the sacred Oracles, and from an attentive, serious, and repeated perusal of them, drew up a system of theology for himself, which in the course of his long life he never saw reason to change<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> A late writer, of deserved eminence in the department of biblical literature, Dr. Campbell, of Aberdeen, strenuously exhorts his students to form a system of divinity for themselves from the sacred Scriptures, without consulting commentators, or previously studying systematic writers in theology. But whether this method

Unfeigned and exalted piety filled the soul of John Howe. It would be difficult to say, if ever there was a better man in England. The principles of the Gospel were felt by him in their utmost energy, and he was wholly devoted both in heart and life to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. His great end in living was to please God, and to advance his glory; and it would not be easy to find a man equal to him in love to all the disciples of Christ, in universal benevolence, and in that purity and humility which adorn the character of a man of God.

While deserved praise is given to Mr. Howe for personal religion, there are two qualities in which he was pre-eminent.

In integrity of heart, he yielded to no man who ever trod on English ground. There was an honesty

is preferable to that which was adopted by Mr. Howe, may be justly questioned. In commentators, a student will find ten thousand hints for illustrating the meaning of the inspired volume, which never would have occurred to himself. Systems of divinity will present a multitude of the acutest criticisms on the most important passages of the Old and New Testament. By perusing these with impartiality and care, will not the student be enabled to form a more accurate and enlarged view of the various doctrines of the Christian religion? To reject the light held out by the wisest and best men of every preceding age, and to determine on the most momentous affairs without deigning to consult them, is certainly not the result of the wisdom which is from above. It is directly contrary to the method which men pursue on every other subject in which their happiness is concerned. Dr. Campbell proceeds on the supposition that a student must invariably have his mind biased by what he reads, and decide under the influence of prejudice. But is it more necessary, that a person should believe every thing he reads in books, than that he should give credit to every thing he hears in conversation. A student of sound judgment will assert only according to the degree of evidence which commentaries and systems present to the mind.

in him which nothing could shake. He had an uprightness of soul which could not be bent from the straight line of rectitude by promises or threatenings, by the hope of worldly benefit or the fear of temporal evil. What appeared to him a duty, nothing could allure or deter him from performing: what he conceived to be a sin, neither earth nor hell could induce him to commit.

The other excellence is magnanimity: and it may well be questioned if there was ever a man in the British isle superior to him in this respect. There is in some characters a certain sublimity both of mind and heart. A Roman writer says of Scipio Africanus "*nihil nisi magnum unquam nec sensit, nec dixit, nec fecit.*" The God of nature may have endued that man with an innate greatness of soul. But in forming the character of John Howe, the God of nature and grace united the combined energies of both. A greater measure of intellectual, moral, and spiritual sublimity than were united in him where shall it be found? He had his sentiments as to lesser points in religion, and as to church government: he acted according to his own judgment, and would be guided by no other man's opinion. But his soul appears to have been filled with the great things of Christianity, and with them alone. He loved all good men, and loved them according to their goodness, without considering to what communion they belonged. To promote pure religion was his grand aim, not the interests of a party. In his own soul, the great fundamental principles of the Gospel reigned, and formed the character of a catholic Christian above all sects and parties, uniting and willing to unite with all good men of every church, who were united to Christ, following him, and devoted to him.



Some unusual displays of divine love this man of God had received ; and near the close of his ministry, while he was dispensing the Lord's supper, the grace of Jesus, his Saviour, affected his soul in so powerful a manner, that it was feared he would have expired, while giving the bread and wine to the members of his church, and discoursing to them on the infinite greatness of redeeming love. With those who visited him as he drew near the gates of death, he conversed as one already in the celestial state. There was something in him so spiritual and dignified, that they could not help regarding him with the veneration due to an inhabitant of heaven. His views of future blessedness were exceedingly exalted, his hopes steadfast, and his desires intense. While his earthly tabernacle was fast hastening to decay, he said to Mrs. Howe, " I think I love you as well as it is fit for one creature to love another ; yet if it were put to my choice, whether to die this moment, or to live this night, and the living this night would secure the continuance of my life for seven years to come, I would choose to die this moment."

Such was the chaplain of Oliver Cromwell. It has usually been conceived, that his preachers were contemptible fanatics. Whatever men, and some of them high in ecclesiastical office, may have said to their disadvantage, we venture to assert, that for greatness of talents, unfeigned piety and goodness, the true learning of a Christian divine, a thorough understanding of the sacred Scriptures, and skill and excellence in preaching, none of the rulers of the house of Tudor, of the house of Stewart, or the house of Hanover ever had a chaplain superior to John Howe.

His works, in the estimation of the public, have deserved the first place in the theological library. For the last threescore years, no books in divinity have uniformly sold for so large a sum, as his two folio volumes. Not a bishop, nor archbishop's writings, though there be a charm in titles, have been marked in catalogues at so high a price.

One of his most celebrated pieces is the "Living Temple." The former part has been considered by adepts in metaphysical reasoning as unequalled at the time: the latter part has been the delight of judicious Christians as a luminous illustration of the grand principles of the Gospel of Christ. "His Blessedness of the Righteous" is a first-rate performance, and contains a vast extent of thought, of learning, but especially of piety. It displays the author's acquaintance with the writings of the ancient philosophers, that he had their sentiments so much in his mind as to communicate a tinge of the Platonic system which was then much in vogue at the universities. Mr. Howe, among others, appears to have been fond of it, and to have estimated it far above its real value; and he sometimes introduces it in his works, when it might better have been omitted. His "Delighting in God" is one of the purest treatises of practical theology to be found in the English language; and demonstrates Mr. Howe to have been not only a superior writer but a most eminent Christian. "The Redeemer's Tears wept over Lost Souls," and "the Redeemer's Dominion over the invisible World" contain a strength of reasoning, a sublimity of thought, and a pathos, which it will not be easy to find elsewhere in an equal degree. Indeed what did he write which does not bear the evident marks of a master's hand? No

man appears to have understood the Scriptures better, or to have possessed equal skill in throwing light on a passage, by two or three words. These brief illustrations are like a sun-beam. And there is scarcely a writer in the whole compass of English theological literature, in whom a greater number of new and uncommon, but useful thoughts are to be found.

His style is, in many places, stiff and involved, and in some obscure; but it has a dignity, an energy, a splendour, and a sublimity which produce the most powerful effects on the reader's mind.

Besides the two folio volumes, consisting of treatises and sermons, which were published in his lifetime, there have since appeared two in octavo, the one on love to God and our neighbour, and the other on miscellaneous subjects; two on the work of the Spirit, the one, in particular persons, and the other on his influence in producing the glory of the latter days; and a duodecimo volume on family worship. All these discourses were taken from his lips by a shorthand writer, without having been ever committed to paper by Mr. Howe, who possessed the talent of forming and retaining an extensive plan in his mind and was accustomed to preach wholly from premeditation, and the thoughts suggested in the time of delivery. But they bear the stamp of their author's superior genius, and are such as none but a great man could preach. It is remarkable, that in his posthumous works there is a perspicuity of style, and a simplifying of ideas which are exceedingly striking, and which the reader of his former pieces could not have expected to find. With all their disadvantages they are valuable remains of one of

England's greatest men, and confirm the ancient adage, "that the gleanings of Ephraim are better than the vintage of Abiezer."

Perhaps it may be considered as no unfair test of intellectual and spiritual excellence that a person can relish the writings of John Howe: if he does not, he may have reason to suspect that something in the head or heart is wrong. A young minister who wishes to attain eminence in his profession, if he has not the works of John Howe, and can procure them in no other way, should sell his coat and buy them: and if that will not suffice, let him sell his bed, and lie on the floor: and if he spend his days in reading them, he will not complain that he lies hard at night.

### JOHN OWEN, D. D.

The name of Dr. John Owen may seem to be placed beyond the limits of our history as he died five years before the revolution, but as he was equally out of the catalogue of the nonconformist's memorial, never having been ejected from any living in the establishment, it seemed proper to give him a place in our work, that it might not be remarked, that the only very eminent person whom we have left unnoticed, was a man for whose sake the order of any history might with propriety be slightly violated.

From the last family of the five regal tribes of Wales, Lewis Owen, esq. of Llwyn, near Dolgelle, was descended, and from him sprang Henry Owen, who was for some time minister of Stadham, in Oxfordshire. This clergyman, who was reckoned

a strict puritan, was blessed, while at Stadham, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixteen, with a second son, whom he named John, who was destined to prove a divine of such eminence as to eclipse, with sacred lustre, all the regal honours of this ancient house. An early proficiency in elementary studies admitted John Owen to the university when only twelve years of age. Here he pursued his academical labours with unquenchable ardour, allowing himself only four hours sleep in a night; though, alas! no holy oil fed his lamp; for he afterwards confessed with blushes that his sole stimulus to mental exertion was the ambitious hope of rising to some distinguished station in church or state. How often has the eye of Omniscience seen this odious mildew sprinkled over the academic laurels of those who have shone with envied lustre in the church! Mr. Owen would doubtless have carried his point, had not God in mercy convinced him of the sin of aiming at his own glory, which called him off from his former pursuits, and induced him to consecrate his future life, with all his mighty talents, to the honour of God, and the reformation of his church. This rendered him averse to the superstitious rites which Laud was then introducing into the university; and thus alienated from him all his former friends, who fled from him as one infected with puritanism, a disease, in their eyes, more dreadful than the plague; so that he was at length obliged to leave the college. He was thus thrown into the hands of the parliamentary party, which so incensed his uncle, who had supported him at the university, that he for ever abandoned him, and settled his estate upon another person.

Mr. Owen, now cast upon the providence of God, went to live with a gentleman as his chaplain; but he, though the friend of this puritan, being a zealous royalist, went into the king's army, and thus left his chaplain once more to seek a maintenance. He went to London where he was a perfect stranger, and had to struggle through his temporal difficulties with the additional burden of a troubled spirit. After he first discovered the evil of sin, this towering genius, who had been the admiration of the university, was so broken down, that for three months he could scarcely speak a word to any one; and for five years the anguish of his mind embittered his life. Under this burden he went one Lord's-day to hear Mr. Calamy, at Aldermanbury church; but after waiting some time, a country minister, of whom he could never afterwards receive the least information, ascended the pulpit, and preached from Matt. viii. 26. "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith," which happily removed all his doubts, and introduced him to the enjoyment of that sacred peace which, without interruption, blessed all his future days.

"A merry heart doth good like a medicine," says the royal preacher, and Mr. Owen now found his peace of conscience diffuse health through his debilitated frame, and restore the former tone of his mind; so that he soon wrote his "Display of Arminianism," which introduced him to notice and esteem. Induced by the merits of this performance, the committee for ejecting scandalous ministers presented him to the living of Fordham, in Essex, where he laboured for a year and a half to the great satisfaction and advantage of the parishioners. But the patron of the living removed him from it,

which gave the inhabitants of Coggeshall, about five miles distant, an opportunity to invite him to be their minister; and as the earl of Warwick, the patron, gave him the living, he consented, and preached to a very judicious congregation of two thousand persons with great success. Here his researches into the Scriptures induced him to abandon the presbyterian system of church government, and to adopt the principles of the independents: so that he not only formed a congregational church upon the plan which appeared to him to be dictated by Christ in the New Testament, but became the most able vindicator of those sentiments which have so much prevailed among dissenters.

His name, like a rich perfume, could not be concealed, so that he was now called to preach before the parliament; and on the twenty-ninth of April, in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-six, delivered to them a discourse on Acts xvi. 2: "A vision appeared to Paul in the night: there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, come over into Macedonia, and help us." It is a bold and energetic appeal to the wisdom and benevolence of the legislature in behalf of those parts of the empire which were destitute of the light of evangelical instruction. Those who are only acquainted with the general strain of Dr. Owen's writings, would not suppose him capable of pouring forth that flood of lucid glowing popular eloquence which is displayed in this sermon. The day after the death of Charles the first, he was called to the difficult task of preaching before the parliament again, when he chose for his text Jeremiah xv. 19, 20. Instead of courting the favour of the ruling powers, by applauding the execution of

Charles, he faithfully warned his country against imagining that a mere change of governors, or forms of government, would remedy the evils introduced by sin; and charged the parliament to seek the genuine eternal interests of the people over whom they ruled. Wisdom and fidelity joined to compose this discourse.

Mr. Owen shortly after attended Cromwell to Ireland, where he presided in the college, and preached in Dublin upwards of a year and a half. He returned to his charge at Coggeshall, but was soon called to preach again at Whitehall, and afterwards to go into Scotland. The House of Commons at length presented him to the deanery of Christ church, Oxford, and soon after he was made D. D. and chosen vice-chancellor of the university, which honourable post he filled with singular wisdom and prudence during five years.

Thus, in the short space of ten years, we are called to witness the most complete revolution in his affairs; and after having seen him persecuted for his conscientious dissent from the fashionable superstition, shunned by his former friends, disowned by his relations, disappointed of a good estate, driven from his college, cast upon the wide world, called to struggle with adversity under the depression of a wounded conscience, which consumed his mental and corporeal vigour: we behold him in the enjoyment of peace "which passeth all understanding," and knew no interruption, exulting in the return of elasticity of mind, with health of body, filling the kingdom with the fame of his literary and religious eminence, introduced to the esteem of the highest characters and authorities in his country, and exalted to the first



post which the church of England then knew, by presiding over that university from whose bosom he had been unkindly driven. History has seldom furnished a more effectual antidote against despondency in adverse circumstances, or a more animating exhortation to follow conscience and principle wherever they may appear to lead.

Six Latin orations, delivered at Oxford while he presided over that university, are printed at the end of the volume which contains his sermons and tracts, and sufficiently display the doctor's talents and learning, as well as the discernment of those who selected him for this post of distinguished honour. He ruled with mild firmness, and was so far from obtruding his sentiments as an independent on the university, that he gave several vacant livings to presbyterians, and would never suffer a congregation of episcopalians, who met opposite to his own door in order to read the prescribed liturgy, to receive the least disturbance. Here he wrote his learned treatise on the perseverance of the saints, and other excellent works, and redeemed time for the labours of the pulpit. When Oliver Cromwell resigned the office of chancellor of Oxford to his son Richard, Dr. Owen delivered a congratulatory oration to the new head of that learned body; and by delicate, yet dignified praises, reminded him of what he ought to be. Shortly after, Dr. Conant being elected vice-chancellor, Dr. Owen took his leave of the university with an address, which presents a singularly beautiful

\* It commences thus; "*minora illa sceptrā, vir amplissimē, quæ manibus, quibus ipsam pœne librat Europam, portasse magnus parens vester non erubuit, insurgentis gloriæ et decoris non contemnenda omīna, ad pedes tuos provolvit Academia Oxoniensis.*"

combination of the jealousy which a learned and laborious man feels for his honest fame, with the humility of a Christian absorbed in the honour and interests of his God. The fortunes and prospects of the university, when first it fell into the hands of the parliament party, are finely depicted, while the improvements which had been made during the five years of his chancellorship, are hinted at with much delicacy'. Owen lays down the academic fasces with a generous grace, bidding his successor welcome to the seat which he vacated, and congratulating the university on the felicity of obtaining a new vice-chancellor, who rose to the honour, not by intrigues, but by modest merit, and who would amply supply the defects of his predecessor. Not the slightest intimation is given that he felt any resentment at being superseded in his office, nor the shadow of evidence furnished that the doctor was opposed to Richard Cromwell, or took any share in his deposition: and though Mr. Baxter says in his life, that Dr. Owen and his assistants did the main work of pulling down Richard, the doctor himself positively denies, and challenges all the world to prove, that he ever pulled down or set up any political party.

\* *Per primum biennium vulgi fuimus et vulgaris fabula. De discrimine nostro fortunisque communibus ex astrologorum heme-  
rologiis et chartis Mercurialibus\* disceptatum est inter lippos et tonsores.—Nempe sic voluit summus rerum arbiter, quo minoris pretii apud mortales esset quicquid est mortale, neque imperiorum venustatem et summa totius mundi decora invadente marcere, ut florem illibatam sola gereret Academia forsàn æquum erat.*

\* Alluding to the royalist Mercuries, the newspapers of that day, and to the astrologers and fortunetellers, to whom the Stewarts, like Saul, made application in hopes of receiving some consoling predictions. See Grainger's Biographical History of England.

He now retired to his own private estate at Stadham, his birth-place ; but the persecution, which followed the restoration, compelled him to take refuge in London, where he published his animadversions on a popish book, entitled, " Fiat Lux," which recommended him to the esteem of chancellor Hyde. This enemy of the nonconformists told the doctor that " he had deserved the best of any English protestant of late years, and that the church was bound to own and advance him," at the same time offering him advancement if he would accept it, and expressing his surprise that a man of such talents and literature should adopt the novel opinion of independency. Owen offered to prove that the Christian church knew no other system of ecclesiastical polity for several ages after Christ, against any bishop whom his lordship should appoint to argue the question with him. This learned man was, however, so cruelly hunted by the myrmidons of the hierarchy, that he was about to accept an invitation from the independents in New England, to preside over the college which they were establishing, but he was stopped by particular orders from the king : and when he was invited to fill the chair of professor of divinity in the United Provinces, love for his country induced him to wave the honour.

He set up a lecture in London as soon as king Charles's indulgence rendered it practicable ; and while many eminent citizens resorted to his oral instruction, the books, which he, from time to time, published, gained him the admiration and esteem of the learned and the great, among whom are particularly mentioned, the earls of Orrery and Anglesea.

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<sup>1</sup> of all my consolation. The passage is very irksome

lords Willoughby, Wharton, and Berkley, and sir John Trevor. The duke of York, and king Charles the second sent for him, and conversed with him concerning the dissenters, and liberty of conscience, which the king declared was right ; and as a testimony of his sense of the injustice done to the persecuted, he gave the doctor a thousand guineas to be distributed among the sufferers. When he applied to his tutor Dr. Barlow, bishop of Lincoln, in behalf of good John Bunyan, who was enduring a long and cruel imprisonment, the bishop declined releasing the baptist, though he had given the independent an assurance, " that he would deny him nothing that he could legally do."

His learned labours procured him the acquaintance and esteem of many eminent foreigners ; some of whom according to the fashion of former times, took a voyage to England to converse with this distinguished Briton ; while others, having read his Latin treatises, learned our language that they might be able to read the rest of his works : which indeed are sufficiently valuable to repay the labour of acquiring the most difficult language, which has been spoken since the confusion of tongues. When, exhausted by his excessive exertions of body and mind, he was unable to preach, he retired to Kensington, near London ; but even here he was incessantly writing, whenever he was able to sit up. He afterwards removed to a house of his own at Ealing ; where, employing his thoughts on the glories which were now opening upon his view, he composed his " Meditations on the Glory of Christ." Writing to a friend at this time, he says, " I am going to him whom my soul has loved, or rather who has loved me with an everlasting love, which is the whole ground

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and wearisome, through strong pains of various sorts, which are all issued in an intermitting fever. All things were provided to carry me to London to-day, according to the advice of my physicians, but we are all disappointed by my utter inability to undertake the journey. I am leaving the ship of the church in a storm, but whilst the great Pilot is in it, the loss of a poor underrower will be inconsiderable. Live and pray, and wait and hope patiently, and do not despond, the promise stands invincible, that he will never leave us nor forsake us. He died on Bartholomew-day, August the twenty-fourth, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-three, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

He is described as tall in his person, with a grave, majestic, and comely aspect, and the air and "deportment of a gentleman." He has been accused of excessive finery in his dress, but it is presumed that those who deplored the vandalism which they imagine reigned in the seats of the muses during the times of the commonwealth, will not attribute it to Dr. Owen as a fault, that when he held the high rank of vice-chancellor of Oxford he appeared in full dress on solemn occasions. He is said to have been very pleasant and cheerful in his social intercourse, having a great command of his passions, especially that of anger; but in his writings, the irritation of those contentious days sometimes appears. After rising to the highest distinction by the learning which his ambition urged him to acquire, he turned it all into religion, by humbly laying it at the feet of the despised Nazarene; so that the languages, which were consecrated by being inscribed on the cross, were again employed only to proclaim the glory of him that was crucified.

Even Anthony Wood was compelled to acknowledge that "he was a person well skilled in the tongues, rabbinical learning, and Jewish rites; that he had a great command of his English pen, and was one of the fairest and genteelest writers that appeared against the church of England." His knowledge of ecclesiastical history and polemical theology was vast and profound, so that when the ancient heresies were revived under the modern names of arminianism and socinianism, he grasped and strangled the snakes with more than herculean powers. The acumen, with which he detected the most specious, and the force with which he crushed the most formidable heresiarch, were, if possible, still surpassed by the accuracy with which he stated and explained the most profound discoveries of Revelation, and the sanctity with which he directed every truth to the purification of the heart, and the regulation of the life. In his exposition of the hundred and thirtieth Psalm, he has developed the wise and benevolent purpose of God in the mental conflicts which the author endured, and proved himself qualified thereby to guide the trembling steps of the returning sinner to the God of pardon; while his treatises, on the mortification of sin in believers, on spiritual mindedness, and on the glory of Christ, prove him equally fitted to guide the Christian in his more advanced stages, and to shew him how "to finish his course with joy, so as to obtain an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." But his grand work, which forms the colossal pedestal to his immortal fame, is his exposition of the epistle to the Hebrews. To this, the studies of his life were more or less directed, and though this epistle may be safely

pronounced the most difficult of all the didactic books of Scripture, no part of the sacred Writings has received so perfect an elucidation in the English or perhaps in any other language; for the celebrated commentary on Isaiah, written in Latin by the learned and pious Vitringa, has far more of system and of fancy with somewhat less of satisfactory solution, even in the didactic parts, than Owen's on the Hebrews. If the theological student should part with his coat or his bed to procure the works of Howe, he, that would not sell his shirt to procure those of John Owen, and especially his exposition, of which every sentence is precious, shews too much regard to his body, and too little for his immortal mind.

This extraordinary man was as much beyond his age in political as in theological science; for he not only defended the doctrine of toleration, while it was most cruelly violated by the Stewarts; but when the presbyterians were in the plenitude of their power, he addressed to the parliament a discourse in favour of this truly Christian and divine doctrine, in which, says Mr. Orton, he went on as large and generous principles as Mr. Locke afterwards did. He has triumphantly proved that the Moloch, which has shed the blood of so many myriads of saints, founds its boasted rights upon a cloud. In him, the independents claim as their own the man who led the way for Locke to promulgate the beneficent principle of toleration, which is destined to bless the latter, wiser, better days of the world; whilst he proved by his numerous unanswered defences of independent churches, that the most liberal allowance of other men's religion, may be associated with the nicest sense of truth, and the most vigorous exertions in

her defence. But that which crowns the statue of Owen with most resplendent, imperishable honours, is that possessing a handsome estate, and labouring in the noblest employments of a literary life, he did not feel himself exempt from the duty of preaching the Gospel amidst the dangers and inconveniences of persecution ; but delivered with a simple engaging eloquence, those divine truths from which he derived the solace of his days, and which he adorned by an unblemished life.

His works in folio are the exposition of the epistle to the Hebrews, in four volumes ; the Perseverance of the Saints ; a treatise on the Holy Spirit ; and a volume of sermons and tracts. Twenty one publications, in quarto, are devoted either to the vindication of Christian doctrines, or to the defence of independent churches. In octavo, there are thirty pieces, some of them of considerable extent, and several of very distinguished excellence.

Were we compelled to adopt in the gross the sentiments of any mere human teacher, we should not hesitate to prefer those of Owen to any other writer in the English language.

As nothing but a degrading insensibility can prevent one from contracting a partiality for the scene of a long residence, a minister who possesses the true pastoral affections must certainly be allowed to feel more than common interest in the history of the church over which he has long watched. He will then look back upon its founder, if not as a patron saint, or guardian angel, as an honoured predecessor, whose labours planted the bowers of paradise where former ages saw only a barren waste, and thus com-



menced a long line of blessings which has been continued to our own days. This is our apology for introducing the two following memoirs of the men who founded the churches of Gosport and Romsey, whose own personal worth and eminence would otherwise have demanded this notice, had they not already been recorded in another valuable work \*.

### WALTER MARSHALL.

He had his education at New college, Oxford, of which he was for some time a fellow; he was afterwards chosen to the same station in the college at Winchester. The vicarage of Hursley, which lies in its vicinity, was for some time the field of his labours: and there the act of uniformity found and cast him out. Providence directed his steps to Gosport; and he became pastor of a congregation in that town, to which he continued to minister to the day of his death. That event took place in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety: and his funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Tomlyn, of Andover, a fellow-sufferer for nonconformity.

That which is the main spring of true and hallowed exertions in every part of the ministerial office, Mr. Marshall possessed in a superior degree. He was eminent for piety and devotedness to God. In his earlier years he had been greatly distressed about the state of his soul. The consciousness of guilt, and a dread of the divine displeasure, filled his heart with bitter anguish. An inability to attain peace of conscience was a source of lasting sorrow.

\* The Nonconformist's Memorial.

His old biographer appears to ascribe his long despondency to the reading of Mr. Baxter's works: but were not many others converted by that great man's writings, and brought to the enjoyment of that happiness which flows from believing in a crucified Redeemer? Besides, did not Mr. Marshall read the sacred Scriptures at the same time; and yet he received no consolation from them? But are the Scriptures to be blamed on this account? At last, mentioning his case to Dr. Thomas Goodwin, it is supposed, and bewailing the greatness of his sins, that able divine replied; "you have forgotten the greatest of all, the sin of unbelief, in refusing to believe in Christ, and rely on his atonement and righteousness for your acceptance with God." The same observation may have been made, and he may have read it, and it may have occurred to his mind a hundred times, but without effect. The day of divine power is now come; he believes in Jesus Christ, and is filled with joy and peace in believing. Let his former inattention be ascribed to the depravity of the carnal mind; and the powerful impression now, to the riches and sovereignty of divine grace.

Mr. Marshall's preaching was both acceptable and edifying to his people, who adhered to him in the gloomy days of persecution. And what deserves the peculiar attention of young ministers, nor is it unnecessary for the old, he profited greatly by it himself: and from its divine efficacy on his heart, he attained to eminent degrees of faith and holiness and consolation.

His book, entitled, "the Gospel Mystery of Sanctification," has been warmly recommended by divines of note, both for learning and piety. Among others,

the excellent Mr. Hervey, in his *Theron and Aspasio*, speaks of it in the following terms. "Mr. Marshall's treatise on Sanctification I shall not recommend in the style of a critic, nor like a person of taste, but with all the simplicity of the weakest Christian, I mean from my own experience. It has been made one of the most useful books to my own heart. I scarce ever fail to receive spiritual consolation and strength from the perusal of it; and was I to be banished into some desolate island, possessed only of two books besides my Bible, this should be one of the two, perhaps the first that I should choose.

"Should any person, hitherto a stranger to the work, purchase it on this recommendation, I must desire to suggest one caution, that he be not surprised if in the beginning he meets with something new and quite out of the common road; or if surprised, that he would not be offended, but calmly and attentively proceed. He will find the author's design opening itself by degrees. He will discern more and more the propriety of his method. And what might at the first view appear like a stumbling-block, will prove to be a fair and ample avenue to the palace of truth, to the temple of holiness, and to the bowers of happiness."

Some books secure a general approbation; and there are others which charm individuals, from a certain congeniality of taste, and union of sentiments. Mr. Hervey's critique may be allowed to originate in part from the latter source. At the same time, it must be allowed, that "the *Mystery of Sanctification*" discovers great closeness of thought, force of reasoning, intimate acquaintance with the sacred Scriptures, exalted piety, profound humility, and a rapturous

admiration of the riches of divine grace. A want of simplicity may not without reason be objected ; and it may be said perhaps, that he erred in making his own views of things, his own feelings, and the dealings of God with his soul (which were in some things peculiar), the universal rule of the divine conduct in the salvation of all others. A few ideas too, which did little injury to himself, are in danger of being abused to evil by those who have but little religion, or none at all.

Death found Walter Marshall with his loins girded about, and his lamp burning, and patiently waiting for the coming of his Lord. To those of his flock that were around him, who had come to witness his departure, he said, " I die in the full persuasion of the truth, and in the comfort of that doctrine which I have preached to you." His last words, which he uttered with the hope and joy of a dying saint, were, " the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." There was now an end of his contempt and persecutions for conscience sake : what remained was the reward of fidelity ; and having suffered with Christ on earth, he was admitted to reign with him in heaven.

Mr. Marshall is regarded by his successors, and by the dissenters at Gosport with veneration, as the father of their church in an evil day of blasphemy and rebuke. The fruit of his labours remains to the present time. In an obscure alley, chosen most probably for its secrecy, the walls of his place of worship, which are still standing, shew that his congregation was small. But it consisted of a body of confessors, who stood firm to their principles amidst all the threatenings and persecution of the times. When

liberty came at last, they increased in number, and a larger meeting-house became necessary. The congregation has continued respectable to the present day; the Gospel has always been preached in its purity; and scarcely have there at any time been fewer than a hundred believers to make an open profession of devotedness to the Saviour of sinners. The present place of worship, which was built about twenty-five years ago, will contain near four times the number of Mr. Marshall's conventicle.

The value of Mr. Marshall's ministry will not be properly estimated, unless we take into account the influence of his preaching after his decease. Had he continued at Hursley till his death, his people must submit to the man whom the patron of the parish presented as his successor, whatever his character might be: such is the disadvantage of an establishment. But at Gosport, the election of the minister who came after him, rested with the members of the church; and they had so learned the Christian doctrine from his lips, that they would choose none but a person who lived and preached as good Mr. Marshall did; so that from the influence of his doctrine, the benefit of his labours reaches down to the present day\*.

\* Mr. Marshall's successor in office was John Earle, who continued till the close of the century. John Clifford, from Winbourne, came in his place in the year one thousand seven hundred and one, and continued to minister to an increasing congregation with much success for the space of thirty years. He died in a good old age. His last words were, "come kind angels perform your office, and convey my soul into the joy of my Lord."

He was succeeded, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-two, by John Hurriou, the son of an eminent independent minister of the same name in London. He was educated under the celebrated Dr. Ridgley. Hitherto, the ministers had been all

## THOMAS WARREN, A. M.

The parentage of Mr. Thomas Warren is not known ; but it appears that he was born in the year one thousand six hundred and seventeen, of a family devoted to the service of Christ in the Gospel. Several of his name were among the nonconformist ministers, and one of them was ejected from the living of Romsey, the scene of his future labours. In

presbyterians ; and the affairs of the congregation had been conducted according to their rules. But on the settlement of Mr. Hurriou, who was an independent, that mode of church government was adopted in its essential principles, and has been continued ever since. Premature infirmities, which terminated in death, closed Mr. Hurriou's labours, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty, when he was only forty-five years of age. He was celebrated as a preacher both for the excellence of the matter, and the agreeableness of his delivery. A few of his sermons, on days of fasting and thanksgiving, were published.

His successor was Thomas Williams, a student from Dr. Marriott's academy, who discharged the duties of the pastoral office with great acceptance, affection, and usefulness, from one thousand seven hundred and fifty to one thousand seven hundred and seventy when, to the grief of his flock, he was removed by death, in the forty-sixth year of his life.

James Watson, son of James Watson, D. D. a dissenting minister in London, was chosen in the room of Mr. Williams. He had studied in the Homerton academy, then under the superintendence of Dr. Conder, Dr. Walker, and Dr. Gibbons. His continuance in Gosport, was only till the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six. He then entered on the study of the law, was for many years a barrister, a member of parliament, was knighted, and died one of the judges of the supreme court of Bengal. He was succeeded, in one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven, by David Bogue, who received his education in the university of Edinburgh, and who, through the good hand of God upon him, continues to minister to the respectable church at Gosport to the present time, the twenty-second of November, in the year one thousand eight hundred and eight.

the year one thousand six hundred and fifty, when he was thirty-three years of age, the parliament presented him to the rectory of Houghton, in Hampshire, about eight miles from Romsey. But he did not enjoy it more than twelve years, for he was ejected by the act of uniformity, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two. He was, however, so moderate a presbyterian that when Charles was restored, perceiving that his former orders would, by episcopalian bigotry, be deemed invalid, he went to Scotland at the end of the year one thousand six hundred and sixty, and was ordained both deacon and presbyter by the bishop of Whithern. On the first of February following he received episcopal letters of institution and induction to his rectory from the bishop of Winchester, and was accordingly inducted on the seventh of February.

But though he went so far to comply with the ruling powers, he could not swear unfeigned assent and consent to every thing contained in a volume so large, and of so various and questionable contents as the book of Common Prayer. He therefore resigned a good living to keep a good conscience. He was held in so high esteem by the dominant party, that either to avail themselves of his talents, or to take so powerful a weight out of the scale of the dissent, they offered him, as the price of his return to the establishment, the bishopric of Salisbury or Winchester. Such, however, was his view of the terms of conformity, and such his strength of principle, that he treated these splendid mitres as Luther did the scarlet hat which was to buy him off from the reformation.

Still he lived unmolested in the worst of times,

and when Charles the second gave his indulgence in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-two, he took out a licence as a presbyterian minister to preach in the house of Mr. Thomas Burbank, in Romsey. It does not appear whether he had before this preached and collected a congregation in private, or had entirely abstained from the exercise of his ministry, but the church which he then openly formed has continued and increased to the present day. Those who behold him first resigning a large parish, and afterwards refusing two extensive bishoprics, to go at length and preach to a handful in a room, may suppose that he foolishly sacrificed the end to the means, and placed under a bushel a light which might have shone through a kingdom. But he was on the contrary a noble and encouraging example of the superior policy of consulting only conscience, acting upon principle, and leaving the consequences to the care of him who is at once the patron of morals, and the arbiter of events. Had he retained his rectory he would, most probably, have been succeeded at death by such men as filled the other vacancies, created by the ejection, who quickly obliterated all traces of evangelical knowledge and piety, not only at Houghton, but also in many other parishes, where the genuine Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been preached from that day to the present.

Had he accepted the diocese of Sarum or Winton the fashion of infrequent preaching, which reigned among the diocesan bishops, would have greatly abridged his usefulness, while he would have found himself perpetually in a society with which he could never coalesce. Those presbyterians who conformed



and took bishoprics felt that they were outnumbered and outweighed by prelates, whose anomalous piety had no affinity with the religion which the puritan divines drew only from the sacred Scriptures. Even Kenn, the most devout of the high-church bishops, could give absolution to a sinner like Charles, who did not even pretend to repent of his crimes, while the whole company kneeled down to receive the blessing which the king, whom they called their common father, deigned to bestow.—What a figure would Warren have made in this right reverend group? Or how could he have knelt to receive a dying benediction from the polluted hands of a hoary debauchee?

But had he conflicted through life amidst these opposing elements, where would have been the fruits of his labours after death? Where are now the names or the proofs of usefulness of those prelates who accepted the sees which he refused? But Warren “being dead yet speaketh.” The church which he formed in a room, in the little country town of Romsey, has perpetuated his name, and the fruits of his ministry, through almost a century and a half. By gathering into the firm bonds of Christian communion a small society of genuine Christians, distinct from the world, he erected the standard around which the friends of pure and undefiled religion in that town, and the adjoining country, have delighted to rally. He indeed laboured among them only eighteen years, for he was mortal; but he formed an immortal successor, for the church which he gathered has never died; and it was so deeply imbued with the spirit of the Gospel which he preached, that it chose another and another pastor of similar prin-

ciples, and by the labours of such men has been ever since maintained with constant accessions of converts to Christ. He who prefers the gain of souls to that of wealth would rather appear at the great day of final account with the honours and rewards of Warren, than with those of the whole bench of bishops his contemporaries.

When king James published his declaration for liberty of conscience, Mr. Warren wrote to a Mr. Leigh, in London, for advice concerning his conduct in this critical affair. His friend informs him, that the ministers in London have shewn, by their conduct, that they deem it right to use the liberty, and some of them, good manners to thank his majesty. While the smiles of the king and courtiers shewed their satisfaction in receiving their address, Mr. Warren, most probably, imitated the conduct of his brethren in London, by not only availing himself of the opportunity to exercise his ministry, but also presenting an address of thanks to the king. For in the London Gazette of this time appears "the loyal address of his majesty's dissenting protestant subjects in Romsey, Ringwood, Fordingbridge, and Christchurch, which was probably drawn up by Mr. Warren himself. They assure his majesty, that "it is not mere gilded hypocrisy, but the real sentiment of loyal verity and gratitude, which hath induced us to soar so high to crave your gracious acceptance of our serious tribute of thanks, which hath no other worth to recommend it but the truth and loyalty of those who present it. Your majesty has, to your great honour, rightly attributed to the most high God,

London Gazette for the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-seven.

whose deputy you are, the sole monarchy over the conscience."

After preaching for eighteen years to his flock at Romsey, which, though not large, seems always to have contained some of the principal inhabitants of the town, he resigned in consequence of the infirmities of years ; but though he was almost blind, he did not entirely desist from the evangelical labours in which he delighted. The day before his death he conversed freely with a friend, who heard the good old man, like Jacob, deliver a brief history of his pilgrimage, which he closed with this peaceful language : " and now I am neither afraid to die, nor unwilling." He was interred in the south aisle of the parish church of Romsey, where is still seen this epitaph : " Here lieth the body of Mr. Thomas Warren, a learned, pious, and faithful minister of Christ in this town : he was a solid and nervous asserter of discriminating grace and freed will." From an original picture of him, which has been lately presented to the church at Romsey, it appears that his wise and learned, mild, and gentle spirit dwelt in a body of small stature, of mortified appearance, but of a keen expressive countenance, though his eyes seem weakened by hard study. He had a controversy with Mr. Eyre, of Salisbury, on the subject of justification, in which he is said to have displayed great superiority of theological knowledge.

### JOHN BUNYAN.

The greater part of the first dissenting churches were furnished with pastors from the clergy who had

been nursed in the bosom of alma mater ; but the present biography records a singular exception in a man, who sprang from the lowest ranks in society, and grovelled, during his earliest years, in profaneness and ignorance, engrossed with the cares of a menial calling.

John Bunyan was born in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-eight, at Elston, in Bedfordshire, near the county town, of poor parents, for his father was a tinker. Unlike the generality of those who have risen to distinction by their own buoyancy, his early years gave no indications of future eminence ; except it be thought that the native vigour of his character was proved by the acts of daring wickedness and consummate depravity for which he was infamous. By cursing and swearing with infernal eloquence, he became a captain of the profane band, and sometimes even shocked those who were themselves profane. Studying to banish the thoughts of God and eternity from his own breast, he was roused to fury whenever he was reminded of religion or the fear of God by the superior character and conduct of others. Misery, the shadow of sin, ever at its heels, though only perceived when men look back on their ways, pursued this sinner closely, for his conscience revenged on him the injuries it received by the most poignant reproaches, so that guilty days, spent in the paradise of fools, were succeeded by nights of horror in the suburbs of hell. As if to shew the obduracy of the heart on which divine grace was to display the triumphs of its omnipotence, mercies were mingled with terrors : for twice he was snatched when in imminent danger of being drowned ; and once when he was a soldier in the civil wars, he was drawn out

to stand as a centinel at the seige of Leicester, but another having requested, for certain reasons, to take his turn, was shot through the head, and thus saved his guilty comrade from perdition. But he, uniting the insensibility of a brute to the depravity of a fiend, still continued to despise the mercies of his Deliverer, and brave the terrors of his Judge.

Marriage, which usually imparts a colour to future life, and deeply affects the eternal interests of men, first gave a turn to the mind of Bunyan, for the wife whom he chose was the daughter of parents who were reckoned religious. She brought with her a portion which at once marks her poverty, and displays the happy effects of religious connections. Two pious books, left her by her father, were all her fortune, which she probably prized, as poor people frequently do, the trifles which form their whole inheritance. In these, which were entitled the "Practice of Piety," and the "Plain Man's Path-way to Heaven," the new-married couple read together, which proved the means of reclaiming the reprobate husband from some of his grosser vices.

After a series of convictions of guilt, which instead of melting his heart to contrition, seemed only to plunge him into the hardened horrors of despair, he was led by conversation with a poor man to read the Bible. The Sadducee now turned Pharisee, and with a vast fund of mistaken religion, he prided himself greatly on his striking reformation and correct morals. But being once at Bedford, he there overheard some poor women who were sitting at a door conversing on religion. He listened while they spoke with a delightful relish of the effects of divine grace in regeneration, and of the necessity of abandoning all

reliance on our own works in order to be justified by faith in "Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." All this being new to him, he opened his mind to these poor people, who led him to Mr. Gifford, the pastor of a baptist church at Bedford. He was admitted into the communion of this church in the twenty-seventh year of his age, and now devoted his active energetic mind to the service of his Redeemer, with the same ardour with which he had before served the destroyer.

His religious attainments soon attracted such notice, that the community, which he had joined, invited him to devote himself to the ministry. After exercising his gifts for some time in private, he was at last publicly ordained. The modesty and diffidence which he maintained in this flattering change of life, formed a pleasing contrast to his former impudence in sin, while his natural courage and ardour were, with undiminished energy, consecrated to a more noble object. The notoriety of his character and change drew vast numbers to listen to his preaching. A student of Cambridge observing a multitude flock to a village church on a working day, enquired what was the cause. On being informed that one Bunyan, a tinker, was to preach there, he gave a boy a few pence to hold his horse, resolved, as he said, to hear the tinker prate. But the tinker prated to such effect, that for some time the scholar wished to hear no other preacher, and through his future life and ministry displayed the triumphs of the despised Nazarene over one brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.

While with rude but irresistible zeal he published the truths to which he owed his present peace of

mind, purity of character, and sublimity of delight, he cultivated that species of eloquence which is most effectual to produce conviction, but is sure to provoke opposition ; so that, as he formed the greater part of the baptist churches in Bedfordshire, he was a mark for the envenomed arrows of those who hated the light which he poured in torrents on all those within his reach. He had, however preached through all the country, when the restoration gave power to his enemies, who seized and threw him into prison, where he lay for twelve years. A manuscript account of his imprisonment, written by Bunyan himself, records the high satisfaction which he enjoyed in suffering the most unjust severities for him who had freely pardoned the enormous guilt of his former years. He felt indeed as a tender husband and father for his wife and four children, one of whom was blind, and who were all deprived of their support : but while he laboured with his hands, as far as a prison allowed, to maintain his family, he cheerfully entrusted them to the care of his God. During his confinement he preached to all to whom he could gain access, and when liberty was offered to him, on condition of promising to abstain from preaching, he constantly replied, “ if you let me out to-day, I shall preach again to-morrow.” He expressly prayed that he might not be liberated, if his imprisonment would be more conducive to the Redeemer’s glory : and his prison thoughts have not merely been more useful than those of the unhappy Dr. Dodd, but the Pilgrim’s Progress, which he wrote in Bedford jail, has extended and perpetuated his usefulness beyond all possible computation. After twelve years he was liberated by the kind interposition of Dr. Barlow, bishop of Lincoln.

He afterwards became pastor of the baptist church at Bedford; and when the kingdom enjoyed a portion of religious liberty, he enlarged the sphere of his useful labours by preaching in London every year. Here he excited great attention, and laboured with the happiest success, for in the metropolis what might not be expected from such a phoenix as Bunyan? On one day's notice such multitudes would assemble to hear him, that the places of worship could not hold them. "At a lecture, at seven o'clock in the dark mornings of winter, I have seen," says one, "about twelve hundred; and I computed about three thousand that came to hear him on a Lord's-day, so that one half of them were obliged to return for want of room<sup>z</sup>.

The last act of his life was a journey of benevolence, on which, being overtaken with a shower, he caught a cold, which proved fatal. On his arrival at his friend's house in London he took to his bed, and after a sickness of ten days, which he bore with the high satisfaction of one who desired to depart and be with Christ, he resigned his spirit into the Redeemer's hands, on the thirty-first day of August, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight, aged sixty years.

From the hour of his conversion, the man who had been polluted with every vice, maintained a purity of conduct, and elevation of character, which slander herself has never dared to assail. Instead of the vanity or the rudeness which too often discolour the virtues of those who, like Bunyan, have emerged from squalid obscurity to flattering distinction, he displayed unaffected humility, and gentleness, and by taking

<sup>z</sup> Gillies, vol. II. p. 254.



care never to forget his former degradation, he disarmed all who would have thrown it in his teeth. He declined a tempting offer for his son, saying, that God had not called him into the ministry to make his children's fortunes. His liberality of sentiment was seen in leading the baptist churches which he formed to admit pædobaptists to their communion ; and the church over which he presided in Bedford has now an independent for their pastor. His industry will be readily acknowledged, when it is known that he printed as many treatises as he had lived years in the world, which together form two folio volumes. His style indeed is rude and artless, but it is lucid as a sun beam, and often speaks with the force of thunder. The imagination which he has displayed in the Pilgrim's Progress, and the Holy War, if cultivated by learning, and devoted to the muses, would have borne him to the loftiest summit of Parnassus. The attempts which have been made to imitate, or to rival his pilgrim, have only served as foils to display the superior genius of its author ; for while the similar allegory of a learned bishop has been, by tacit consent, delivered over to oblivion, Bunyan's pilgrim has been translated into most of the languages of Europe, and passed through more editions than any other book, except the Bible.

#### TIMOTHY CRUSO, M. A.

Mr. Timothy Cruso was born about the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-five ; though unlike many whose existence is only known by the register of their births and burials, his entrance on the stage

of being is indistinctly recorded, while his eminent usefulness to the best interests of mankind has rendered his birth an auspicious event. He was educated for the ministry in a dissenting academy, and afterwards at one of the universities in North Britain. His works prove that he was a scribe well instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, and able rightly to divide the word of truth. The period of his entrance into the vineyard rendered him strictly a *dissenting* minister; for he was one of the second generation of pastors to the separate churches; though being snatched away in the midst of his days he died before many of those whose expulsion from the establishment rendered them the fathers of the dissent. He was chosen pastor of a church which met in Crutched Friars, London, where Mr. Fuller was his assistant. As he excelled in every thing requisite to form a complete preacher, preparing his sermons with great care and profound judgment, inculcating constantly the most important subjects in a serious, scriptural, and practical method, and recommending them with the charms of an agreeable voice, and graceful manner, he was esteemed one of the greatest preachers of his age. His congregation therefore was large, and the church exceedingly flourishing, during his life, which, unhappily for the interests of religion in this place, was short; for at his death an unadvised attempt to introduce a successor contrary to the majority of votes, produced a separation, and sowed the seeds of future decay.

In addition to his constant labours among his own flock, Mr. Cruso was chosen one of the preachers of the Merchants' lecture at Pinner's-hall. A printed volume of the sermons which he delivered there is

yet extant, and forms a handsome eulogium on the discernment of those who chose him to this post, and of those who flocked to his lectures. While his popular talents were crowned with great success, his amiable disposition and conduct endeared him not only to his own family but also to a very large circle of valuable friends. But the heavenly treasure was deposited in an earthen vessel, and his soul, like that of Watts, perhaps also of Paul, and some other distinguished men, was not well lodged; for his body was contemptible in its appearance, and frail in its texture. Exhausted therefore by the constant studies and hard labour which his indefatigable mind, ever eager to increase both his knowledge and his usefulness, imposed upon the feeble frame, he sunk under his work in the prime of life, and died on the twenty-sixth day of November, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-seven, when only forty-one years of age.

The continuation of Grainger's biographical history of England has insinuated, that with long devotions he associated a fondness for the pleasures of the festive board rather than the practice of religious austerities. But Matthew Mead, who knew him well, preached his funeral sermon, and edited the posthumous volume of his discourses, gives a different turn to his character. "If I may use the phrase in fashion, he lived too fast, not as too many do, who shorten their lives by their debaucheries and sinful excesses, but as a taper which wastes itself to give light to others, None who knew him, and love the interest of Christ, and the souls of men, but must bewail the loss of such an eminent servant in the Lord's work, especially in such a day as this, wherein

the harvest is so great, and faithful labourers so few. For he was a person whose worth was well known in this city, a person of sound judgment in the great doctrines of the Gospel, and held fast the form of sound words, carefully shewing the paths of those by-way-men who please themselves with the fond thoughts of such opinions, wherein they choose to walk by themselves, apart from the community of saints and church of God\*.”

### NATHANIEL TAYLOR.

He was one of those who cast in his lot among dissenters in evil times. Possessing the two radical qualifications for the Christian ministry, piety and talents, he pursued a course of literary and theological studies, under the tuition of Mr. Edward Veal. While thus engaged, he had the happiness to attend on the preaching of Mr. Charnock, whose every-day's discourses, published in two large folio volumes, while they fill us with horror at the wickedness of those who could forbid such a man to preach, place him high in the first rank of the divines of the seventeenth century, for genius and learning. To be a constant hearer of such a man, and to enjoy the benefit of his counsel in the prosecution of his studies, and of his criticisms in academical exercises, is what every one on the road to the chair of a public teacher must highly prize: and such was Mr. Taylor's privilege.

After partaking of the advantages of a private academy, he went over to Holland, and spent some

\* Preface to Cruso's Sermons, by Matthew Mead.

time in one of her universities, attending the lectures of the celebrated professors, who were at that time to be found in all the seats of learning in the united provinces. When he returned home, and entered on the office of a preacher of the Gospel, England lay under the foul disgrace of throwing into her filthy jails good men, who would preach the Gospel, but could not conscientiously approve of every iota in her established creed, and extensive rubric. He for a season exercised his ministry more privately in the country; and afterwards coming to London, he preached to a congregation which had before been under the care of Mr. John Shower.

Soon after the revolution he was chosen assistant to Richard Mayo, a nonconformist, ejected from Kingston upon Thames, and afterwards pastor of a presbyterian church, which first met at Buckingham-house, near College-hill, but had just removed to Salter's-hall. Mr. Mayo dying in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-five, Mr. Taylor was ordained in his room, and John Newman was appointed to assist him. He was likewise called to take a part in the weekly lecture which was carried on at his place of worship, by the most eminent presbyterian ministers in the metropolis. In these situations he continued during the remainder of his life.

As a student, Nathaniel Taylor was a pattern of diligence and perseverance. His thirst after knowledge induced him to drink deep of the pure fountain of divine truth; and to the study of the sacred Scriptures, he united the acquisition of the various branches of learning which are as handmaids to wait and serve at the call of celestial wisdom, and like the gold and jewels of Egypt are of use to adorn the sanctuary of

God. It has been no uncommon fancy, that genius requires not the aid of study, and is oppressed under the load of musty folios, which should be left for plodding dulness to wade through. But if such persons will consult the annals of literature, they will find that it is only by the union of genius and study that men become scholars ; and that of those superior characters, to whose writings we have frequent recourse in order to enjoy improvement and pleasure, not one has acquired the distinction by genius alone, but by genius toiling day and night with unwearied labour, in reading and meditation, to produce those works which give lustre to their name.

That his preaching met with peculiar acceptance may be naturally supposed. Vivacity of thought, brilliancy of imagination, a retentive memory, warmth of affections, fluency of expression, an agreeable voice, and a prepossessing delivery rendered his public services uncommonly pleasing. He had a talent peculiar to himself for awakening sinners ; and when his subject called him to perform the part of a Boanerges, his words, his voice, his looks were such as to harrow up their souls ; and his expressions were as goads, and as nails fastened in a sure place by the great Master of assemblies. His exhortations to families and individuals after recovery from sickness, are spoken of as having been peculiarly suitable and impressive ; and it is a talent of singular value. But by diligence of application, and an assiduous improvement of natural capacity, how many might attain eminence in this enviable gift, which is exercised at a time when, from the softening influence of sorrow and pain, the heart is, humanly speaking, best prepared to receive instruction, and to listen to salutary counsel. Job xxiii. 16.

In his deportment towards his colleagues in office, we have a pleasing display both of Christian piety and Christian prudence. Towards Mr. Mayo, his senior, he was all respect and affection: Mr. Newman, his assistant, he always treated with the tenderness of a father, and the kindness of a friend. To have succeeded in both is no mean praise, when it is considered how many, even of great name, have failed in these reciprocal duties. So frequently has this been the case, that the relation between a pastor and an assistant, or between an old and a young minister as co-pastors, has been commonly viewed with dread, and shunned with horror. By this means many a flourishing congregation has been ruined. The pastor, able and faithful in his day, but robbed by old age of his former energy and powers, is afraid to admit a helper; and the people drop off, one after another, never to return. An assistant, or a co-pastor in the vigour of youth, would have retained them and increased the number; and the congregation would have enjoyed in their united labours, the sagest maxims of wisdom resulting from long experience, combined with the attractive vivacity and animation of youthful energy. But is it too difficult a lesson for a minister, who has seen more than threescore years, to learn, in respect to his youthful associate, "he must increase, but I must decrease;" and without feeling envy, displeasure, or dislike, to see him attended by a larger audience than himself? Or is it too hard a task for a young minister, to pay superior respect to his senior in office, and to render becoming deference to age, and homage to more extensive observation and experience? Surely it ought not to be so. Where these lessons are not learnt, and the

two cannot agree, there is too much reason to reprobate the peevishness of age, and the petulance of youth; and to condemn both for the want of that magnanimity which, under the influence of piety and prudence, would enable them to live together not only in the calmness of peace, but in the cordiality of friendship. For the sake of the prosperity of the cause of Christ let these childish, and worse than childish humours be repressed, let them be annihilated. Whenever the infirmities of years render a minister unable to perform the various duties of his office, let an assistant or co-pastor be sought; and if they would not bring disgrace upon their office and themselves, let them live in love as brethren, or as father and son, striving together only for the faith of the Gospel.

Nathaniel Taylor had arrived at what is accounted the prime of a minister's life; and his flock as well as his friends were looking forward with delight to many future years of his usefulness, and of their own instruction and comfort from his labours. But the great Head of the church, in calling away his servants from their work, acts by rules far beyond our comprehension, and often in a way contrary to our judgment. This good man had been for years subject to severe attacks of the gout and stone, which he bore with the spirit of a Christian under the discipline of his heavenly Father. After the last fit of the gout from which he recovered, when he was told by a friend that he had uttered more bitter complaints than usual, he replied, "my extremity indeed was very great, but I had not one hard thought of God: and I have received so much benefit by my afflictions, that I reckon them among the greatest mercies of my life." Soon



after his recovery from a very violent attack, he was unexpectedly seized again, and speedily fell a victim to the violence of the disease.

Sudden death appears to have been his wish, and the affecting sentiments which he expressed in the funeral sermon of Nathaniel Vincent, who was removed in this way, lead us to judge that it was not to him an unwelcome mode of quitting life. "For my own part," says he, "on mature deliberation, I do not think it a desirable thing for a good man, who is ready for death, to be worn away like a stone, by a long and continual dropping. May my house and soul be in order, and then the sooner it quits this vile body, and leaves this wretched world, if in the twinkling of an eye, so much the better! To which there is but one circumstance more, which I should desire may be added, *viz.* that I may die preaching the everlasting Gospel, or administering the Lord's supper. May my taper be blown out in the sanctuary! and may I presently pass, in an instant, from serving the church militant here on earth, to join with the church triumphant in heaven! But we must not be our own choosers, and to be sure God will dispose all things in the best manner for them that are his."

He died in the beginning of May, in the year one thousand seven hundred and two. An unseen counsellor has frequently been observed to direct the thoughts of ministers to subjects peculiarly appropriate, and enabled them to deliver truths remarkably suitable to themselves and to their flock; but at the time by neither of them was the full force perceived. It was so in the present instance: Mr. Taylor was led for some Lord's-days immediately

preceding his death, in several discourses to vindicate the wisdom of providence in the death of eminent persons in public stations, who are removed in the midst of their usefulness<sup>b</sup>.

His works are a "Preservative against Deism," "on the Nature of saving Faith," "an Answer to Sherlock, vindicating the Dissenters from the Charge of Schism," and three funeral sermons. After his death was published a volume, consisting chiefly of sermons on the covenant of grace, preached at the Tuesday's lecture at Salter's-hall. Had such discourses always been preached there, the lecture would not have ceased for want of hearers.

All the volumes of Nathaniel Taylor are of a very superior kind. His ideas are scriptural, numerous, select, and well arranged; and few writers have expressed their ideas with greater beauty, or with greater strength. It will be for the benefit of every student in divinity to procure them, and give them a distinguished place among those very useful books which are most frequently to be perused.

### BENJAMIN KEACH.

This was the most considerable writer among the baptists during the first period of our history. He was born in Buckinghamshire, in the year one thousand six hundred and forty. His parents were pious, but too poor to give him a liberal education. He was designed for trade, but aspired after literary attainments. He early devoted himself to the study of the sacred Scriptures, and was baptized on a profession of

<sup>b</sup> See funeral Sermon by John Shower.

faith at fifteen years of age. In his eighteenth year, the society of Christians, to which he had united himself, invited him to preach the Gospel among them.

When the restoration had introduced a new order of things, he began to feel the iron rod of persecution. Like the dragoons in France, after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the troopers in England were employed in wreaking the vengeance of the government upon dissenters from the established faith : and some of them having seized Mr. Keach while he was preaching, bound him, and laying him on the ground, mounted their horses with the design of trampling him to death, which would have been his fate, had not their officer arrived at the moment, and prevented the execution of their inhuman purpose.

Some time afterwards this active young man having printed a catechism, entitled " the Child's Instructor, or a new and easy Primer," into which he had naturally introduced the peculiar sentiments of his denomination, he was indicted at the assizes at Aylesbury, in October, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-four, " for publishing certain damnable positions contrary to the book of common prayer, and the liturgy of the church of England." The trial, which is recorded by Crosby, vol. II. p. 186, &c. was managed by the prosecutors with a degree of violence, which reflects great dishonour on the spirit of the times, and the character of the lord chief justice Hyde, who then sat on the bench. The jury was almost compelled to find him guilty ; and he was sentenced to stand in the pillory at Aylesbury and at Winslow, to have his book burnt by the hands of the hangman, and to pay a fine of twenty pounds. So formidable in those days, was a little baptist catechism !

Having endured the punishment of the law, or rather of the court, he continued for four years to preach in those parts; but finding no rest from informers, he determined to seek refuge in London. On his way he was robbed, and, with his wife and family, entered the metropolis penniless, and almost unknown. But he was soon taken notice of, and in a few months invited and ordained to be pastor of a small congregation which met in a private house in Tooley-street, and afterwards removed to a commodious meeting-house which they built in Horsley-down.

In the earlier part of life, Mr. Keach was an arminian (a creed very prevalent at that time among this sect), but after his arrival in London, he began to examine the sentiments of the general and particular baptists. The result was a renunciation of his former opinions, and the embracing of the calvinistic system, for which, as he advanced in years, he became peculiarly strenuous, and as peculiarly severe against those whom he conceived to believe his own former creed. Had he shewn less of this severity, it would have been as honourable to himself, and no less beneficial to the cause of Christ.

He continued with his flock during the remainder of his life. Like his brethren he had his share of sufferings; and with those who survived the revolution, had the consolation to spend his old age in peace, and in the quiet exercise of his ministry among his people. The congregation gradually increased, so that they were under the necessity of repeatedly enlarging the place, till at last it would contain, Crosby says, a thousand people.

His qualifications for the ministry were considerable; and his temper and conduct adorned the doctrine.

of God his Saviour. He generally used notes in the pulpit, especially in the latter part of his life. After a long season of labour, he was seized with a violent illness, which disabled him from conversing with his friends ; but he bore it with resignation to the divine will, and what little he could say was suitable to the character of a man of God. He died on the eighteenth of July, in the year one thousand seven hundred and four, in the sixty-fourth year of his age.

Benjamin Keach was a busy man, both in the pulpit and in the press. He published eighteen practical books, sixteen controversial, and nine which he calls poetical. There are six on baptism: so important did their distinguishing tenet appear, that during the whole of the seventeenth century, there is scarcely a writer of that denomination who did not publish something on the subject.

His two most celebrated pieces are his "Tropologia, or a Key to open the Scripture Metaphors," in two volumes folio, published in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-two: and his "Gospel Mysteries unveiled, or an Exposition of all the Parables," in folio, in the year one thousand seven hundred and four. Both are books for which the Christian world is under great obligations to the author. He has, indeed, heaped together every thing which he could collect ; and it requires judgment in the reader to separate what is good, from what is fanciful and strained, and not to the purpose. But still we are very much indebted to Mr. Keach for doing so fully and so well, on both topics, what no Englishman had done before. On the continent tropology had been studied with the most assiduous attention ; and some valuable treatises had been written on the sub-

ject, but none had so successfully cultivated it at home. To the honour of Mr. Keach, and as the strongest proof of their value, both these performances are still in request, and continue to be sold at a high price to the present day.

### CHARLES MARIE DE VEIL, D. D.

He was of the seed of Abraham ; his parents lived at Metz, in Lorrain ; and trained up their son in the jewish religion. In early youth he was converted to the Christian faith by the famous Bossuet, and it need scarcely be added, according to the creed of the church of Rome. This change so enraged the father, that he attempted to put his son to death. The convert, escaping his fury, applied himself diligently to study, became a preacher, and, besides other dignities, was appointed a professor in the college of Anjou, and graced with the title of doctor of divinity.

The catholics in France, eager to run down the protestants, thought it would do honour to their own cause, and essential injury to their opponents, to employ a converted Jew in the confutation of their tenets ; and De Veil was engaged to write against them. But the result proved unfavourable to the expectations of his friends. On examining the principles of the protestants, which he was to confute, he found truth where he imagined there was nothing but error ; and dreading the vengeance of the catholics, and determining to embrace the protestant faith, he quitted France, with all his preferments, escaped

secretly into Holland, and there renounced his connection with Rome in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-seven, and associated himself with the Dutch presbyterians.

About a year afterwards he came over to England, and was very cordially received by Compton, bishop of London, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and other eminent divines. He was admitted into the clerical office, and became chaplain to a noble family, and tutor to the children. But he did not continue long in the communion of the established church. In consequence of reading the writings of the baptists, and conversation with the ministers of that denomination, he bid adieu to his former protestant connection, and became member of a baptist church. When he renounced judaism, he received the initiatory rite of Christianity; but now conceiving sprinkling not to be baptism, he was dipped. Some time afterwards he was chosen pastor of a small baptist society in Gracechurch-street (the former minister of which had renounced his principles from the fear of persecution); but as he spoke the English tongue very imperfectly, it may naturally be supposed that he was not a popular preacher.

His dereliction of the church of England robbed him of all his former friends but Dr. Tillotson. The baptists, however, raised him a small salary, which he enjoyed during the remainder of his life. In addition to this he practised physic for his maintenance, and was accounted skilful. He died in the beginning of the eighteenth century. His character is thus drawn by Crosby: "he was a grave judicious divine, a good chronologist, a great historian, a skil-

ful grammarian, and such a pious good man, that he brought an honour to the cause in which he was embarked :”

His works were of the exegetical kind. In the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-two, he wrote a commentary on the two first gospels chiefly from the writings of the fathers and other writers, and interspersed with some remarks of his own, in defence of the dogmas of popery. It was re-published by him in England, in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-eight, with considerable alterations: in consequence of his change of religion all the popery was thrown out. While he continued in the church of England, he published in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-nine, a literal commentary on the song of Solomon; and in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty, a literal exposition of the minor prophets. After he became a baptist, he wrote his commentary on the acts of the apostles, in which he argues most strenuously in favour of his newly adopted system. Twelve pages are occupied with arguments in its favour (Acts ii. 36, 37,) and scarcely as many lines to prove that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah. It was published in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-four, and like his former works, in the Latin tongue; but in the following year it was translated into English, and as the translator appears to have been imperfectly acquainted with our language, it is supposed to have

‘ Dom. Calmet, whose communion he had forsaken, says, “ Charles Marie de Veil was a canon regular, &c. afterwards he abjured the catholic faith, became an anabaptist, and so died in the beginning of the eighteenth century, having gone through all religions without having any.” Dict. vol. III. p. 458, edit. 1732.



been done by himself. In all his commentaries he makes a very happy use of his superior knowledge of the jewish rites and usages.

It is truly astonishing, that neither de Veil himself, nor those into whose communions he successively passed, ever thought of employing his talents and energies for the conversion of the jews<sup>d</sup>.

### Mr. DANIEL BURGESS.

Almost all the leaders of the dissent were steady luminaries, which moved regularly in their orbits, and shone with equable splendour; but we have now to record the name of one who forms an exception to the general character, who from wise and benevolent motives, shot forth into an eccentric course, where he rather blazed than shone; and while the corruscations of his genius offended the eyes of some, he shed on the minds of others that heavenly ray which

<sup>d</sup> Another learned man of the same family, and of the same nation, named Louis de Compeigne de Veil, appeared in England about the same time. He early embraced the Romish religion, which he afterwards renounced for the protestant faith, and came over from France, where he was the king's interpreter for the oriental languages, to England in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-nine, and entered into the communion of the established church. He published several books, chiefly relating to jewish literature, which are said to display considerable learning. Dr. Tillotson was likewise his particular friend and patron. Birch's Life of Tillotson, p. 79, 80.

Wolfius, in his "*Bibliotheca Hebraica*," says, that Louis de Veil was the brother of Charles, had his name from Louis the fourteenth standing godfather, and the rite being performed at Compeigne, which was one of the palaces of the kings of France.

Crosby, vol. III. Tillotson's Life.

exalted him to the distinguished honours of those, who, having turned many to righteousness, shine as the stars in the kingdom of their Father.

Daniel Burgess was born in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-five, at Staines, near London, where his father was then minister. The venerable parent afterwards removed to the living of Collingbourne Ducis, Wilts, which, with its revenue of four hundred pounds per annum, he resigned, rather than pollute his conscience by subscribing to the act of uniformity. His son, the subject of this memoir, gave such early proofs of superior talents, that, at nine years of age, he was sent to Westminster school, and was entered commoner of Magdalen hall, Oxford, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty, when he was but about fifteen years old. Here he continued with the character of a close hard student, till he was of bachelor's standing; when he and several others, entertaining conscientious objections to some things, which were required of them previously to taking their degree, chose rather to forego the honour, than submit to the imposition.

Having left the university, he was residing with his father, when he was invited to be chaplain, first to Mr. Foyl, of Chute, in Wilts; and afterwards to Mr. Smith, of Tedworth, where he was tutor to that gentleman's son. In the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-seven, Mr. Baxter's great friend, the earl of Orrery, lord president of Munster, prevailed on Mr. Burgess to accompany him to Ireland. In order to strengthen the protestant interest, the earl established at Charleville, a school, of which he nominated Mr. Burgess head master; who, while here, superintended also the education of the sons of many

of the Irish nobility and gentry. After having left this school, he was for some time chaplain to lady Mervin, near Dublin ; in which city he was ordained as a presbyterian minister, by Drs. Harrison and Rolls, and some others of that denomination. Here also he married a Mrs. Briscoe, by whom he had a son and two daughters.

After a residence of seven years in Ireland, his father, growing infirm, sent for him home ; where he arrived in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-four, and took up his abode at Marlborough, Wilts. The times were now dark and tempestuous, for all the fury of arbitrary power and priestly malignity were poured upon the heads of dissenters ; but he applied himself closely to the work of the ministry, and had the courage, says his biographer Matthew Henry, to put to sea in a storm when very few nonconformists did. His courage was rewarded, and his abundant labours crowned with great success at Marlborough and its vicinity. He afterwards animated with his enlarged soul, Baden, Hungerford, Rawsbury, Albourn, and several other places.

The affectionate attachment which multitudes felt for his apostolic ministry, found its sure counterpoise in the hatred and opposition of those, who like bats, wink and scream at the light which they cannot bear. Thus were furnished many tales of woe, which would be too long for this brief memoir. Being once apprehended for the enormous sin of preaching the word of God to those who were perishing in ignorance, he was committed to the common jail at Marlborough ; where, having nothing to sit or lie upon, he was obliged to walk his cell all night, till his friends the following day contrived to put a bed in at

the window. He was denied a copy of his commitment; but after some time he came out upon bail, and suffered much in persecutions at assizes and sessions.

The notoriety of his character having rendered him so much the mark of the persecutors, that his usefulness seemed essentially impeded in the country, he went, about the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-five, to London, where he was destined to labour with peculiar honours. As the dissenters, soon after this period, began to enjoy their birthright, religious freedom, full scope was allowed to his ardent zeal; which now flamed out with those happy singularities, which, in London, could not fail to attract the attention of a multitude. His hearers were soon very numerous, and among them there were several persons of distinction, who took for him a place of worship in Brydges-street, Covent-garden. Being situated in the neighbourhood of the theatre, and surrounded by many who are fools enough to mock at sin and religion, he frequently had among his hearers those who came only to make themselves merry at the expense of religion, dissenters, and Daniel Burgess. This his undaunted courage, his pointed wit, and ready elocution, turned to great advantage; for he frequently fixed his eye on those scoffers, and addressing them personally, in a lively, piercing, and serious manner, was blessed to the conversion of many who came only to mock.

As the tide had now turned decidedly in favour of dissenters, and the London Gazettes invited them to lay their claims before the commissioners, whom the king had appointed to award them damages for the injuries done them in the times of persecution, Mr.

Burgess was advised, by a person of distinction, to avenge himself on those in the country who had outrun even the violence of the law in their conduct towards him. But he nobly declared, that he had freely forgiven them, and should never think of revenge.

He laboured near thirty years in London, with unrivalled popularity and great success. But having been obliged to quit the place of worship which they hired, his congregation built a new one, into which they had scarcely entered, before such differences arose among them, that a large party left him, while the building was yet encumbered with a heavy debt. To this was added another trial, for in March, in the year one thousand seven hundred and nine, Dr. Sacheverell's mob broke into the meeting-house, demolished the windows, and tearing out the pulpit and pews, burned them in Lincoln's-inn-fields. These afflictions, particularly the differences between him and his people, as they abridged his usefulness, embittered the last days of Mr. Burgess. That which sunk his spirits and broke his strength, says Mr. Henry, was not so much his working as his not being allowed to work. In a private paper he thus speaks: "I have never inclined to express my feelings to any friend, save Emmanuel only. But it must and shall be said to the praise of never-failing grace, all my nights are not sleepless, all days are not restless, every friend is not found faithless, nor are all enemies found useless; all disturbed studies are not tasteless, all the disadvantaged sermons have not proved fruitless, all the various troubles have not been comfortless; content, I hope, as Luther said; to let our names be vilified, so that his name may be hallowed and glorified."

At last the vital lamp, which had blazed amidst tempestuous winds, and lighted many to the realms of eternal day, began to expire. During some months, in which he languished under the decay of nature, his breast was the temple of peace, his countenance spoke the joy of his heart, and his voice, which had often instructed men how to live, now taught them how to die. At the commencement of his last illness, he said to his friends, "well, if God has any more work for me, he can repair these decays, and will do it; and if not, blessed be God, I have a good home to go to; and this is a good time to go home;" alluding, probably, to the storm which had gathered over dissenters at the close of queen Anne's reign, but was dispelled by the accession of George the first to the British throne. He added, "if I must be idle, I had rather be idle under ground, than idle above ground." The evening before his death, a friend that came to see him said, "I fear there will be a storm;" to which he replied, "but God will house some of his children first. Well! here is all trouble at the gate, but when got through it, no more, no more." On seeing him faint away, a near relation shrieked out in alarm and anguish; so that when he recovered again, he asked what was the meaning of that shriek? and on being told that it was because they thought him dying, he replied; "what if I had, where was the need of that confusion?"—Thus cheerfully he fell asleep, in the month of January, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirteen, in the sixty-eighth year of his age.

Those who knew him intimately, pronounce him a most pleasant man in conversation, ever employing his wit and learning to the most pious and edifying purposes. He was as much esteemed by eminence

and worth as he was maligned by ignorance and malevolence. His study was his paradise, which he left only to do some good office. He often said, that he chose rather to be profitable than fashionable in his preaching, and that he thought it cost him more pains to study plainness than it did others to study fineness; for he was willing to go out of the common way to lead sinners into the right way. That's the best key which best fits the lock, and opens the door; though it be not a silver or golden key. He frequently used homely similitudes, odd turns of expression, and striking stories, such as abound in the sermons of bishop Latimer, which by some were turned to his reproach: but many who acknowledged that they went to hear him only to deride him, and divert themselves with his quaint turns, were pierced with such convictions of guilt and danger, as led them to embrace the refuge which he so earnestly recommended. The anecdotes of these occurrences are very numerous, and still furnish the social intercourse of Christians of different communions, with an agreeable union of entertainment and instruction.

Many tales, however, were invented by his enemies to blast his usefulness; and as he was indefatigable and successful in his labours, he was industriously misrepresented by those who hated the cause,

\* It is related, that, preaching on the robe of righteousness, he said, if any of you would have a good and cheap suit, you will go to Monmouth-street; if you want a suit for life, you will go to the court of chancery; but if you wish for a suit which will last to eternity, you must go to the Lord Jesus Christ, and put on his robe of righteousness. In the reign of William, he assigned a curious motive for the people of God who were the descendants of Jacob, being called Israelites, the reason is, because God did not choose that his people should be called Jacobites.

for which he was willing to be counted a madman or a fool. A gentleman, who was once led by curiosity to hear him, could scarcely be persuaded that he had really listened to the genuine Daniel Burgess, whose ludicrous fame had allured him thither, for, said he, I never heard a better sermon in my life.

He, indeed, abhorred the presumption of many, who have outraged his manner, and thus become pulpit merry-andrews by venting the levities of the moment; for he studied his sermons with great care, being as distant from the conceit of such as suppose that if they speak with animation, they may pour forth what they never thought of before, as from the mistake of others who imagine, that if a discourse be well prepared, it is of no consequence how dull and soporific the delivery. He constantly studied also to direct the attention of his hearers to the grand discoveries of divine mercy, which constitute the essence of the Gospel; and these he is said to have preached with a simplicity and force, which, when combined, display a mind of the highest order, and form a preacher most eminently calculated for usefulness. He was far from obtruding at the throne of the Eternal the quaintness and familiarity with which some dare to joke with the God whom they profess to adore, but was ever serious and solemn in his prayers, without the slightest tinge of drollery.

It is, however, difficult to give a verdict on his mode of preaching, which has since had many imitators, both in the establishment and among dissenters. Much allowance should certainly be made for natural temper, which will show itself whenever a man feels perfectly at home; so that when we see clergy, who glory in the title of queer fellows, and



who set the table in a roar, stand in the pulpit like statues of ice, while their hearers betray alarming symptoms of the fatal lethargy, which precedes being frozen to death, who will give them praise for their contemptuous jokes on droll preachers? Or who will think that man in earnest, who feels the touch of the pulpit like that of a torpedo, who is all quick-silver every where else, but dull as lead in the rostrum; animated when discoursing on the prices of stocks, or the speed of a race horse, and only inspired with the genius of slumber, when discoursing to heedless mortals on approaching death, judgment, and eternity? Yet these are the men who delight to profane the ashes of such preachers as Daniel Burgess?

On the other hand it must be owned, that in the footsteps of one who, by natural eccentricities, wins uncommon attention, and by nobler singularity is crowned with eminent success, follow crowds of extravagant imitators, who, aiming to excite what their model has studied to repress, degrade the sacred Majesty of divine truth, and sink the pulpit below the stage. The serious consideration of the subject leads them to this conclusion, that where it is natural and not forced, the corruscations of wit, which will sparkle through all efforts to restrain it, will impart a vivacity to preaching which may awaken attention, fix stings in the memory and conscience, and rather help than hinder usefulness. But where it is indulged through levity, and still more where it is mimicked to court a grin, it will grieve the Holy Spirit of God, shock the pious, disgust the judicious, and leave the pulpit buffoon to the vile honours and rewards of making men laugh where they ought to weep, and furnishing them with food for religious jokes and

gossip, where they ought to have provided themes for devout meditation and prayer.

### GEORGE TROSSE, M. A.

A very respectable family in Exeter gave birth to George Trosse, in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-one. His talents displayed themselves at

Volume of sermons and tracts by Matthew Henry. His works were, Soliloquies, which he printed in Ireland. Mr. Noah Webb's Funeral Sermon, in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-five, when he was in Wiltshire. And after he settled in London, a Call to Sinners, written at the request of judge Rotheram, for the use of condemned criminals. Three Questions plainly resolved. A Discourse of the Lord's Supper. Counsel to the Rich, with an address to king William. Of Reconciliation to God. Characters of a godly Man, more or less grown in grace. The Christian Decalogue. Hastiness to Anger reproved. Directions for reading the Word of God profitably. The Golden Snuffers, the first sermon preached to the societies for the reformation of manners. Holy Contention for the Faith. Duties of Parents and Children. Proofs of the Scriptures. Divine Original. Sure Way to Wealth. Funeral Sermon on Mrs. Hook, Mr. Fleming, Dr. Rolls, and the countess of Ranelagh. A sermon, in the Morning Exercise, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-nine, concerning the Conversion of young People. The most difficult Duty made easy; or Directions to bring our Hearts to forgive Injuries. Foolish Talking and Jestings described and condemned, in a sermon on Eph. v. 4. Rules for hearing the Word, with certain and saving benefits. Forty Aphorisms concerning Riches. Poisons and Antidotes, the sins whereby poverty tempts; and helpful considerations against them. Mrs. Sarah Bull's funeral sermon. The Death and Rest, Resurrection and blessed Portion of the Saints; with the work of the Redeemer and Redeemed. Man's whole Duty, and God's wonderful Intreaty of him thereunto. Advice to Parents and Children. And a Latin defence of nonconformity, entitled, *Appellatio ad Fratres externos*.

school, and gave him a superiority to his fellows. Being designed for mercantile life, he was in his fifteenth year sent over to France, to learn the language of that country. Freed from restraint and discipline, at a time when they are most necessary, while he learned to speak French, he became a proud and vicious youth. Returning home at the end of a year, he staid some time in London, not much to his improvement; and then was sent to Portugal, where he remained several years in the house of an English merchant. Every protestant, on his arrival at that country, was then obliged to deliver up his Bible, and all his religious books, to persons appointed by the government, who retained them in their custody till his departure. Living without the Scriptures or the smallest vestige of public worship, what but an increase of iniquity could be expected: at last disagreeing with the gentleman under whose care he was placed, he came back to England a profane, intemperate young man.

A continuance in the same course of life at home, injured his constitution to such a degree, that he became deranged, and continued in a very deplorable state for many months. On his recovery, he soon returned to his former courses; and a second derangement was the consequence, with a return of that perversion of intellect and horror of soul in an extreme degree.

His reflections on the criminality of parents who send children abroad in their early years, and expose them to the most powerful temptations, merit the consideration of every father or mother who professes to know the value of an immortal soul. His own mother tasted the bitterness of anguish from the con-

duct of her unhappy son. There was indeed a radical fault in his education. His parents were violent against the puritans, and all their ways. "When but a child," he says, "I imbibed a more than filial affection for cavaliers, the liturgy, and the priesthood; and a mortal hatred to puritans, and their preaching and manner of life; and I used to jeer at their praying by the Spirit." When he returned from abroad, he would attend in no place but where the liturgy was read; and he was among the loudest in his condemnation of the sober ministry in the days of the commonwealth: his drunkenness and his zeal kept pace with each other.

During his first derangement, serious thoughts had entered into his mind; but they vanished with the restoration of health: his second calamity brought them back, and he ever afterwards appeared to be a new man. This was in his twenty-fifth year. Feeling an earnest desire to be useful to the souls of men, in order to enjoy the benefits of a university education, he entered at Pembroke-hall, Oxford, and continued there a student of more than ordinary diligence for seven years.

The restoration introduced to the offices and honours of the universities, a new description of men, whose character and conduct he did not approve. Piety, which had reigned there before, was discouraged, and its votaries treated with ridicule and contempt. He therefore resolved to leave the place. The study of the question of conformity now engaged his most serious attention, as the result must determine the circumstances and colour of his future life. The decision of his judgment, after the most mature examination of this subject, was in favour of noncon-

formity: and it must be allowed, that worldly considerations of ease and emolument could have had no influence on his choice.

Returning to his native city, he found his friends all strongly attached to the new ecclesiastical order of things, and was constrained to bear among them the inconveniences of singularity. He soon began to preach in private houses, and being much approved, was, after some time prevailed on to be ordained. The service was performed in Somersetshire: Joseph Alleine, whose praise is in all the churches, presided on the occasion; and two others were ordained at the same time. From this period he preached privately to a select society every Lord's-day; he dispensed the Lord's-supper to them every month; and he used to attend the parish church at the stated seasons of worship. Being a dissenter, he possessed some advantages over the ejected ministers; as several of the laws which bore with a severe weight on them, did not attach to him. During Charles's indulgence he officiated openly; but when it was withdrawn he returned to his former practice. In the beginning of James's reign, he was seized at a conventicle, and lay six months in prison. When the revolution broke all the bonds of violence, and the sword of persecution, he became a stated preacher; and, the same year, was chosen to succeed Mr. Hallett, as one of the dissenting ministers in the city of Exeter.

From that time he laboured most abundantly in the work of the Lord. He was a hard student. The number of hours which he spent in his library would frighten many ministers in the present day. During the severest cold of winter he never had a fire in his study. The same thing is mentioned of Dr. Annesley.

**What iron bodies must men have had in that day ! It was a singular advantage which the great scholars and divines at the time of the reformation and the succeeding age had possessed over the modern men of straw. Their powerful and vigorous souls dwelt in bodies of the strongest texture, which enabled them to suffer hardships, to bear heat and cold, to endure labour and fatigue, and to apply to their literary pursuits with a constancy and perseverance, which would crush the more delicate frames of the generality of the men of letters in the present day.**

While his application as a student condemns the sluggard, his singular eminence in piety, the uncommon fervour of his devotion must humble to the dust the man who reads it. Every month, a whole day was spent in meditation and prayer ; and every week he had his appointed hours for extraordinary and special supplication. By the frequency of his kneeling, and continuing long in that posture, his knees, says the biographer, were become brawney and corneous. We are not to wonder if one who lived so near to God, and conversed so frequently with him, when he ascended the pulpit to preach, appeared like a man of God, and spoke with an authority and weight far beyond all the rules of mere human eloquence. His discourses were full of evangelical truth, directed to the conscience, and delivered with fervour ; they were likewise exceedingly frequent. His superior attainments, both in the gift and grace of prayer, crowned the whole of his services in the sanctuary. With what ardour of soul, what earnestness of intreaty, what divine oratory did he pour out his soul to God, and draw the hearts of the congregation upwards with his own to heaven !

In the private duties of his office, he was as exemplary for his diligence. He spent much time in visiting the sick, and conversing with them about eternal things. To the poor he was a compassionate friend; and as God had given him abundance, he was exceedingly liberal in supplying their temporal wants. In every relation, domestic, civil, and sacred, he shone as an eminent pattern of Christian virtue; not an individual in Exeter was more respected for excellence of character and conduct.

Full fifty years did George Trosse labour in the harvest of our Lord Jesus Christ; and all that time was as eminent for piety and zeal, as he had been before for impiety and excess. At last his merciful dismission into the joy of his Lord arrived on the eleventh of January, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirteen. It was the Lord's-day; he had been preaching Christ's Gospel, and on his way home was seized with a fainting fit. When he was a little recovered, a friend deeply affected with his situation, exclaimed, "why did you preach when you was so ill?" "A minister," he replied, "should die preaching." When they had carried him to his house, he put himself into a posture for prayer, and expired. He was in the eighty-second year of his age.

He published but little. The principal fruit of his studies was reaped by his people in his discourses from the pulpit; and the result of his labours will be seen in the precious souls saved by his ministry, which shall be his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## JOSEPH STENNETT.

This excellent man was born at Albington, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-three. Edward Stennett his father, by espousing the cause of parliament in the civil wars, incurred the severe displeasure of his relations; and by his principles as a dissenter, afterwards exposed himself to many and painful sufferings. He was a man of eminent piety, and a zealous minister of Christ; and he practised as a physician for the support of his numerous family.

His son Joseph, trained up from childhood in the ways of religion, was early brought to the saving knowledge of the truth. The following evidence of this was found among his papers after his death: "O God of my salvation, how abundant was thy goodness! O invaluable mercy! Thou didst season my tender years with a religious education, so that I sucked in the rudiments of Christianity as it were with my mother's milk, by the gracious admonitions and holy discipline of my godly parents. This was an antidote sent from heaven against the corroding poison of sin: this made conscience speak, while my childish tongue could but stammer: this is a branch of thy divine bounty and goodness, for which my soul shall for ever bless thee."

Having gone through a course of classical education at Wallingford, he applied himself to the French and Italian tongues, became a critic in the Hebrew, studied the liberal sciences, and made considerable progress in philosophy. Quitting the country for London, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-five, he employed himself for five years in the



education of youth : and, constantly eager in the pursuit of useful knowledge, that he might understand men as well as books, he carefully cultivated the acquaintance of persons eminent for wisdom and goodness.

By the solicitations of his friends, he was at last prevailed on to appear in the pulpit; and preaching a lecture occasionally at a meeting-house in Devonshire-square, he was taken notice of by a congregation of seventh-day baptists, who met there for worship, but afterwards removed to Pinner's-hall. They had some time before lost their valuable pastor, Francis Bampfield, who ended his days in Newgate for the testimony of Jesus; and considering Mr. Stennett as a suitable successor, they requested him to undertake the pastoral charge of their little church. Being of the same sentiments as to the duty of observing the seventh day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, he accepted their invitation, and was ordained in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety one. Though their outward circumstances were such, that they could not do much towards the support of his family, he could never be induced to leave them; but continued their faithful and affectionate pastor to the day of his death.

Besides his labours among his own people, he usually preached to other congregations on the first day of the week. His biographer records the following circumstance as to his manner: "it was his practice to carry into the pulpit some short hints only, consisting of the heads of his discourse, and references to texts of Scripture. He committed things only and not words to memory: those were abundantly supplied in the course of speaking."

His eminent worth was noticed by the public ; and he had considerable offices of preferment in the established church. But to him conformity had no charms : " I bless God," said he to a friend, " I can hardly allow these things to be called temptations ; because I never felt in my mind the least disposition to enter into any treaty with them."

In the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty, his health visibly declined ; and afflictions crowded thick upon him, and wore down his earthly frame which was at best delicate and feeble. The physicians recommended the air of the country, and it was tried, but without success. Feeling the day of his departure draw near, he called his children around him, and gave them those last counsels which might be expected from the departing breath of so wise and good a man. His latter end was peace, and his hopes of future blessedness, lively and firm. To a friend, who made enquiry as to the state of his mind under the pressure of bodily distress, he answered, " I rejoice in the God of my salvation, who is my Strength and my God." He departed this life, the eleventh of July, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirteen, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

Mr. Stennett displayed a taste for poetry, of which his metrical version of Solomon's Song, and his sacramental hymns furnish no unfavourable specimen. His friend, Mr. Tate, the poet laureat, bore this honourable testimony : " Mr. Stennett has the happiness to be a good poet, without being a slave to the muses." His thanksgiving sermon, for the victory at Blenheim, was so much relished by queen Anne, that she ordered him a gratuity out of the

privy purse, with thanks for the pleasure she had received in the perusal.

Like many of his dissenting brethren, he was a strenuous friend of civil liberty; and no wonder that those, who had bitterly felt in dungeons, and loss of goods, the cruel lash of despotism, were taught to prize the sweets of freedom, and to regard it as one of the first of earthly blessings<sup>‡</sup>. They had learnt its value from its loss in the reigns of the Stewarts; and they had learnt it still more in William's reign, from the enjoyment of its numerous privileges both in civil and in sacred life, both in the house of God, and in their own.

By his talents, Mr. Stennett rendered himself exceedingly useful to his denomination, and was very highly respected by them. In their public concerns, he was most commonly called to take the lead. The address, which the baptist ministers delivered as a body, congratulating king William on his preservation from the assassination plot, was drawn up and presented by him.

Though a peaceable man, he was engaged in disputes with the quakers, the antitrinitarians, and the nonjurors. He had likewise a controversy with Mr. Rassen on baptism. After his death, his works were collected, and published in five octavo volumes, to which is prefixed an account of his life.

As a mark of the esteem in which he was held by

<sup>‡</sup> The advocate for arbitrary power, we will engage to free from his mania, in the space in which the sun runs his annual course. Confinement in a damp and gloomy dungeon, not unfrequent scourgings, and repeated and heavy fines, will, in less than a twelve-month, complete the cure. He will come out the friend of liberty and of mankind.

his brethren, they fixed on him as the most proper person to write the history of the baptists ; and with much intreaty, pressed the work upon him. He undertook it, formed his plan, which was very extensive, and for some years was employed in collecting materials. But his growing infirmities prevented him from carrying his purpose into execution. Mr. Benjamin Stinton, successor to Mr. B. Keach, afterwards turned his thoughts to the same subject, but like Mr. Stennett left the work unfinished. Had either of them completed his plan, more justice would have been rendered to the subject, and more honour to the body, than was done by the person into whose hands it afterwards fell.

### MATTHEW HENRY.

The names already recorded, were those of men who were educated within the bosom of the establishment, though, by the new terms of conformity, they were driven from her communion ; but the subject of the following biographical sketch, was one of a second generation, who rose up after the dissent was formed, and who chose to devote his life to perpetuate those principles and practices which originated with his ancestors. Would God that the nonconformists had always been succeeded by such men as Matthew Henry ! He was born at Broad Oak, in Flintshire, of the renowned Philip Henry, who received this “fruit of the womb as his reward” about two months after he had offered the sacrifice of his living at the altar of Christ and conscience. Matthew, like many other eminent persons, was a

child of infirm health, and early displayed a mind too vigorous and active for the frame which it inspired.

So soon were his parent's prayers answered, that at ten years of age he had the deepest convictions of the evil of sin, by hearing his father preach on Psalm li. 7: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." He afterwards concluded, that at eleven he was converted to God and blessed with the divine favour. When he was thirteen years of age he wrote in his diary, "it is to-day thirteen years since I was born, and though I was sickly, the Lord hath preserved me ever since. Lord Jesus, I bless thee for thy Word, for good parents, that I was taken into covenant betimes in baptism, that I have had a good education, that I am thine." When his father once preached on the nature and growth of grace, as compared in Scripture to a grain of mustard seed, he was much affected; and having relieved his anxious mind by laying it open to his pious parent, he came running to his sister, saying with great gladness, "I hope I have received that blessed grain of true grace; and though it is very small at present, it will come to something in time."

That the child of such a father should early love to imitate preaching, and wish to be a minister, is not wonderful; but of those who watched his puerile essays, some wondered at the wisdom and gravity which they displayed, while others expressed their fears to his parent lest he should be too forward; but the father replied, "let him go on, he fears God and designs well, and I hope God will keep him and bless him." It was the charitable practice of Mr. Philip Henry to take some young men into his house, to

assist them in preparing for the universities, for which he long retained so strong a partiality, that he used to advise his young friends to go thither, though he expected they would then conform. Mr. William Turner, afterwards vicar of Walburton, in Essex, was in his house when Matthew Henry began to apply to grammar, so that he who was pupil to the father, was sub-tutor to the son. But when it was time for him to remove to the university, the father had learned, from what he saw of the consequences, to forego, the advantages of the seats of the muses, in order to preserve uninjured his best principles; so that he resolved to send his son to a dissenting seminary for the ministry. It may be thought, indeed, that he who taught his daughter Hebrew at seven years of age, had little occasion to send his son from under the paternal roof in order to prepare him for the church; but Philip Henry was a public spirited man, and he found that his frequent labours in the ministry were incompatible with the constant attentions which education indispensably requires.

After having been at the seminary of Mr. Thomas Doolittle, young Mr. Henry was induced by the influence of friends to remove to Gray's Inn, in order to study the law. But, true to his original purpose, keeping his eye on the glory of the Redeemer as his polar star, he quickly returned to the work of the ministry. His first public services were at his father's residence, where he received the most pleasing testimonies of acceptance. Being afterwards invited to spend a few days with a friend at Nantwich, in Cheshire, he preached on the words of Job, "with God is terrible majesty," which produced the most striking and delightful effects.

He was now invited to Chester, where he preached at the house of Mr. Henthorne, a sugar baker, which laid the foundation of the church of which he was many years the faithful and beloved pastor. But having been called back to London, he found that the king was issuing out licenses to empower the nonconformists to preach ; on which he wrote to his father, that Mr. Faldo, an independent minister, had preached publicly at the meeting-house in Moorfields, both morning and afternoon, to many hundreds of people, who were delighted at the reviving of the work. This led him to prepare seriously for his future office ; and in a private paper, entitled, " Serious Self-examination before Ordination," he lays open a soul evidently formed by the Holy Spirit for the work of the ministry. It seems that it had been suggested to him that he might possibly obtain episcopal ordination, without submitting to the oaths and declarations to which dissenters objected, but after having examined the question with great seriousness, he determined rather to be ordained by presbyters. As the ministers to whom he applied were very aged and cautious, he was ordained with great privacy the ninth day of May, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-seven.

Mr. Henry was welcomed at Chester as his worth deserved, and was successful in raising a large congregation. After a time, three of his sisters were married in the same town. He was also blessed with a wife worthy of such a husband ; but, as a flower too lovely for this desert, she was quickly transplanted to paradise. Her mother, who at first opposed the match, but afterwards came, with her husband, to reside in Mr. Henry's family, said " she believed God

had sent her daughter there to prepare her for heaven." She died within a year and a half of their marriage, shortly after bringing into the world a daughter, whom the bereaved father presented to Mr. Philip Henry's arms for baptism, with these affecting words, "Although my house be not now so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, and this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make me not to grow; and according to the tenour of this covenant I offer up this child to the great God, as a plant out of a dry ground, desiring it may be implanted into Christ." At this scene, which touched all the springs of nature and of grace, a large congregation burst into tears. He married again the daughter of Robert Warburton, esq. of Grange, by whom he had several children.

Of his ministry it may be truly said, that like the apostle he was in labours more abundant; for his constant work on the Lord's-day was to pray six times in public, to expound twice, and preach twice. His two public services seem to have been fully equal to three in the present day. He went through the whole Bible, by way of exposition, more than once; and how much he excelled as an expositor of Scripture the church of Christ well knows. The list of subjects on which he preached is in print, and displays a comprehensive mind, anxious to declare the whole counsel of God: but in his private notes he says, I find myself most in my element when preaching Christ and him crucified, for the more I think and speak of him, the more I love him.

Eager to seize every opportunity of usefulness, he diligently visited the prisoners in the castle of Chester,



where his benevolent compassion and zeal introduced him to some very affecting scenes. But he never confined his labours to Chester, for he was the life of the dissenting communion through all that country, and constantly preached in the adjoining towns and villages every week. After having refused several invitations from churches in London, he at length consented to leave Chester, in order to take the pastoral charge of the church which Dr. Bates first gathered at Hackney, near London. He has left on record his reasons for quitting the first scene of his labours, where he had preached nearly five and twenty years, where he had three hundred and fifty communicants, and probably a thousand hearers; a people of whom he said with a heavy heart, at parting, "they love me too well." The perusal of his private notes on the subject, may satisfy every Christian that he acted under the happy auspices of divine approbation.

He commenced, the eighteenth day of May, in the year one thousand seven hundred and twelve, his pastoral care at Hackney, expounding the first chapter of Genesis in the morning, and in the afternoon the first of Matthew, as if beginning life anew. That he removed to the vicinity of London to enjoy, not ease, but labour, was evident; for his unexhausted zeal blazed forth with new ardour to fill his new and enlarged sphere. He devised additional modes of usefulness, preaching not only at Hackney, but in London also, early and late on the same Sabbath. He often preached lectures every evening in the week, and sometimes two or three on the same day, so that his biographer says, if ever any minister in our days erred in excess of labours he was the person. But

one of the principal motives which led him to London, was to be able to print the remaining volumes of his exposition.

He now drew near to the goal for which he panted. Having alleviated the pains of separation from his friends at Chester by promising to visit them every year, he made his last journey to them in the month of June, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fourteen. On his return, he was taken ill at Nantwich, where he said to his friend, Mr. Illidge, you have been used to take notice of the sayings of dying men, this is mine, "that a life spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most pleasant life that any one can live in this world." He joined his venerable father in the assembly of just men made perfect, the twenty-second day of June, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fourteen, in the fifty-second year of his age.

When the news reached London, not only his own congregation, but almost every other among the dissenters was filled with the deepest grief. Even those who loved not the communion to which he belonged, owned that it had lost its brightest ornament. He has left behind him in his works, a library of divinity, which supersedes all eulogium on his character. His mind was not, indeed, formed for metaphysical abstraction, or elegant sublimity; nor was his pen celebrated for those splendid ornaments which feast the fancy, nor those vigorous strokes which thrill through the soul; but he possessed a peculiar faculty, which may be called a religious naiveté, which introduced well-known sentiments in an enchanting air of novel simplicity; while his style abounded with antitheses which attic taste would sometimes refuse, but which

human nature will ever feel and admire. The mere plans of his sermons and expositions contain more vivid, lucid instruction, and less deserve the name of skeletons than the finished discourses of many other divines. The knowledge of Scripture, which he possessed, was immense, so that his composition is a tissue of texts, often admirably illustrative of his subject, but sometimes producing a jingle of sounds. This fault, however, less appears in his printed exposition of the Scriptures, for which he prepared in a manner that both unveils the secret glory of his own personal religion, and accounts for the unrivalled excellencies of the work. In his private notes, he charges himself to ask of God such a style as might convey the knowledge of Scripture in the true spirit of Scripture itself; for such a recollection of parallel texts as might make the Scripture its own expositor; for those pointed epigrammatic turns which would fix themselves on the memory like nails fastened in a sure place. "God granted him that which he requested." His volumes contain the result of the most erudite researches, concealed under the veil of language, which condescends to the simplest minds. The learned leisure of the universities, or the sanctified names of dignitaries may have produced works which rank higher in the esteem of scholars; but Matthew Henry stands without a rival, as an expositor of Scripture for the edification of the church of God. But as the rabbinical fable affirms, that the Creator left the polar regions of the heavens unadorned with stars, that if any pretender to deity should arise, he might be challenged to prove his godhead by filling up the vacancy; it was so ordered that Mr. Henry should terminate at the Acts of the Apostles, his valuable exposition, which has

been compleated<sup>a</sup> by those who have followed his manner, *hæd passibus æquis*<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> The exposition of the epistle to the Romans was written by Dr. Evans; the first of Corinthians, by Samuel Brown; second of Corinthians, Dr. Mayo; Galatians, Mr. Bayes; Ephesians, Mr. Moswell; Philippians, Mr. Harris; Colossians, Mr. Harris; first and second of Thessalonians, Mr. Mayo; first and second of Timothy, Mr. Atkinson; Titus, Jeremiah Smith; Philemon, Mr. Hottershead; Hebrews, Mr. Tong; James, Mr. Wright; first of Peter, Mr. Morril: first, second, and third of John, Mr. Reynolds; Jude, Mr. Billingsley; and Revelations, by Mr. Tong.

<sup>1</sup> See Life of Matthew Henry by Mr. Tong. His works are a discourse concerning the Nature of Schism. The Life of his Father, Mr. Philip Henry. A discourse on Meekness and Quietness of Spirit. A Scripture Catechism. Family Hymns. A plain Catechism for Children. The Communicant's Companion. A Method of Prayer, with Scripture Expressions proper to be used under each Head. His exposition of the Scriptures formed five volumes folio, and the additional labours of his continuators compose a sixth. Many sermons, which he printed on particular subjects are valuable, and together with his smaller treatises, are published in one large folio volume.

## SECTION II.

## LIVES OF PRIVATE CHRISTIANS.

## RICHARD CROMWELL.

**T**O render the annals of the church the mere history of priests, is to create a tiresome sameness by the uniform livery of office, and to deprive those, who have been called the laity, of the honourable notice to which they are frequently entitled by their effective exertions in the kingdom of Christ. But among those who have not ascended the pulpit, where can a more important character be found than he who has filled a throne? While the subject of the succeeding memoir is thus distinguished, he was so perfectly free from all share in the transactions which led to his elevation, that his history may be contemplated with dispassionate curiosity.

Richard Cromwell was born at Huntingdon, October the fourth, in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-six, and was baptized on the nineteenth of the month, at the parish church of St. John, in that town. He was the third son, though at length the eldest surviving child, of Oliver the protector, who was, at the birth of this son, living in obscurity, which gave little promise of his future greatness. He completed his education at Felsted, in Essex, where he enjoyed the inspection of his mother's father, Mr. John Boucher. While the nation was convulsed

with the civil wars, which raised his father to a throne, young Richard was admitted, in his twenty-first year, a member of the society of Lincoln's-inn. It is asserted, that while here, he spent his time, as is too customary at the inns of court, not in studying the law, but in gratifying youthful propensities to sensual pleasure and the festive board. If he loved the company of the dissolute, it is no wonder that he became the companion of the cavaliers, with whom, it is said, he used to drink the king's health, saying, "here is to our landlord." When Charles was condemned to die, Richard Cromwell threw himself on his knees at his father's feet, to intercede for the royal life. But Oliver was not composed of such materials as are easily melted with tears, and he seems not to have entertained at that time the highest opinion of this son, who was living in inglorious ease, while his younger brother Henry was fighting by his father's side, and rising to posts of trust in those perilous times.

In the year one thousand six hundred and forty-nine, at the age of twenty-three, he married Dorothy, the eldest daughter of Richard Major, esq. of Hursley, a village midway between Winchester and Romsey, Hants, where he afterwards enjoyed a peaceful retreat on the estate which was his wife's portion. The father, in negotiating this match for his son, says, "Mr. Major hesitated on account of some ill reports, but I gave him such answers as were next at hand, and I believe to some satisfaction. I know God has been above all ill reports, and will in his own time vindicate me." Complaining that his son exceeded his income, the Protector says, "I grudge him not laudable recreations, nor an honourable carriage, yet I scruple to feed this luxurious humour.

God forbid his being my son should allow him to live not pleasingly to our heavenly Father, who hath raised me out of the dust to what I am. Indeed I cannot think I do well to feed a voluptuous humour in my son, in a time when some precious spirits are bleeding and breathing their last for the good and safety of the rest."

From the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-five, he seems to have lived more agreeably to his father's wishes. He was then made first lord of trade and navigation; and in the following year was elected to represent in the senate the county of Hants. As the members of parliament were proceeding to pay their respects to the protector, in the August, of the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-seven, the stairs of the banqueting-house gave way, by which Richard Cromwell was happy to escape from death with broken bones. When the lord protector resigned the chancellorship of Oxford, his son Richard was chosen to that office by the university, on the eighteenth of July, in the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-seven. About six months after, the new chancellor removed Dr. Owen, who had been vice-chancellor five years, and appointed Dr. Conant<sup>k</sup>, rector of Exeter college, to be his successor.

Though Richard is usually supposed to have been dissatisfied with his father's dangerous elevation, he discovered no particular reluctance to ascend his vacant throne; to which honour he was appointed by his father's will, and being proclaimed protector in the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-nine, he received the most flattering addresses from all parts of the em-

<sup>k</sup> The following compliment was paid to him by a pun upon his name:—"Conanti nihil difficile."

pire. He was now only in his thirty-third year, when he grasped the British sceptre, which, in Oliver's hands, was a rod of iron that made Europe tremble; but in the hands of his son became a feeble reed, unequal to the tempests of the times. The political history of his reign belongs not to these pages, which have only to record his moral and religious character. His first proclamation was for encouraging godly ministers, in which he maintains the grand principles of toleration; and gave a promise of that regard for equity and genuine liberty which his future conduct never belied.

For suffering himself to be so soon and so easily hurled from his throne, he has been ridiculed and condemned as despicably pusillanimous. But Mr. Howe, who was his chaplain, asks, "how could he be a weak man, when upon the remonstrance that was brought from the army by his brother-in-law Fleetwood, he stood it out all night against his whole council, and continued the debate till four o'clock in the morning, having none but Thurlow to abet him; maintaining that, to dissolve the parliament, would be both his ruin and theirs." Richard, however, determined that, as his path to the empire was unstained with blood, he would not defile his seat with it, nor shed one drop to support the throne of the Cromwells. They who can see in this resolve no marks of mental force and greatness, deserve our pity as much as our censure and contempt. At the restoration, he prudently retired to the continent of Europe, and resided for some time both at Paris and at Geneva. But when he perceived that the English had again changed their mind concerning Charles, he returned, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty, to his native



country. Here he beheld the nation so completely recover from its paroxysm of loyalty to the Stewarts, as to expel them from the throne, and call in William to be their second Cromwell. His son, who bore the name of his grandfather Oliver, offered to raise a regiment of horse for the service of William in Ireland ; but the prudent monarch declined the offer.

On his return to England, Mr. Cromwell resided at Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire. But there is also an unbroken tradition of his living in his latter days at Hursley, under the name of Clark, and attending at the meeting in Romsey ; where what was called Cromwell's seat, was but lately removed at the erection of a larger place. This was probably after the death of his only son Oliver, who died in the year one thousand seven hundred and five, in the forty-fifth year of his age, without issue, by which the manor of Merdon, at Hursley, devolved to his father. But the daughters of Richard Cromwell, supposing the estate became their own, commenced an unnatural suit against their father, who appearing in court a venerable old man of eighty, was highly revered by the judge, who allowed him a chair in court ; where, after having pronounced a verdict in his favour, he severely reproached the daughters for not allowing their parent to enjoy his rights in peace, during his few remaining years. He was blessed with remarkable health, and would gallop his horse many miles at the age of fourscore. In his last illness, he said to his daughters, " live in love, I am going to the God of love," and then departed July the thirteenth, in the year one thousand seven hundred and twelve, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

He is said to have been a fine person, of polished

manners, and, while protector, was respected for judgment and talents, as his speech to his parliament was superior to that of his chancellor Fiennes, who was himself esteemed an able man. Because he had not the temper of the times, he was represented by some as destitute of religion, but he is declared by others to have been "a very worthy person, of an engaging nature and religious disposition, giving great respect to the best of persons, both ministers and others." He maintained a constant correspondence with Mr. Howe; and when that excellent man was upon his dying bed, Mr. Cromwell visited him. They had much serious conversation and, amidst many tears, which they both shed, on the review of the divine conduct towards them and the church, they parted in a solemn, affecting manner. Burnet says, "as Richard Cromwell had done hurt to nobody, so nobody did ever study to hurt him, by a rare instance of the instability of human greatness, and of the security of innocence<sup>1</sup>." The same writer says, "he pretended to be an independent;" but as he retained the same profession, when he not only had no further occasion for the pretence, but was even exposed to odium on this account, it may be safely concluded that his judgment approved the sentiments of the independents. He must therefore have enjoyed high satisfaction in living not only to see the opprobrium which the Stewarts had thrown upon his family, greatly removed by the change of national politics at the revolution, but to behold also the triumph of his religious sentiments by the adoption of that universal toleration, which has ever been the darling of the independents.

<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. I. p. 83.

## LADY LISLE,

As she is usually termed, deserves to be inscribed on the rolls of the noble army of martyrs ; and as she suffered in consequence of her attachment to religion and dissenters, only three years before our history strictly commences, it would be too scrupulous an adherence to the mere circumstance of dates, to neglect this opportunity of recording a noble example of female Christian heroism.

Alicia, co-heiress of sir White Beconsawe, *knt.* was married October the twenty-third, in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-six, to John Lisle, *esq.* one of the judges of king Charles the first, who was made a lord of the upper house by the protector. At the restoration, he prudently fled the kingdom, but was assassinated at Lausanne, in Switzerland, by the procurement of Henrietta, the queen-mother. His widow, who had disapproved of the execution of Charles, was a woman of eminent piety, and her name was rendered dear by her extensive charities. After the defeat of the duke of Monmouth, a dissenting minister of the name of Hicks, came to her house for shelter, but, though she received him kindly, she, knowing it would expose her to danger, first gave him warning to escape, and then sent her servant to give information to a magistrate. One Nelthorpe was with Hicks, but Mrs. Lisle knew nothing of him ; nor, indeed, were either of the refugees inserted in any proclamation as rebels, so that she was not obliged to know that it was unlawful to give them shelter. This venerable widow, who is said, in Warren's History of Hampshire, to have been eighty years

of age, brought into court for sheltering distressed men, whose lives were at stake, excited compassion in every breast, but that of the brutal Jefferies, who himself turned witness against her, and thus disqualified himself to sit as her judge. The jury twice brought her in not guilty; but being threatened with an attain of jury, to save themselves, they pronounced her guilty. She was sentenced to be burnt; by which sentence, and by the infamous conduct of the judge, the whole court seemed wrought up to a paroxysm of grief and indignation; though Burnet says, she was so unmoved, perhaps worn out with years, that she fell asleep during the trial. The greatest interest was made to save her life, but the king had promised before her trial to put her to death. The sentence was, however, mitigated from burning to beheading. As she was a woman of fine understanding, as well as exalted devotion and benevolence, she behaved in the most heroic manner at the place of execution. The speech, which notwithstanding her advanced age, she delivered on the scaffold, is said to have commenced with a religious exordium, expressive of the patience and submission of her soul to the divine will. She added "I have been told that my fate had been the same if I had not relieved the two unfortunates. I have no excuse in what I did, but surprize and fear, which I think my jury must also have to excuse them to the world. I have been told, that the court used to be counsel for the prisoner; but instead of advice, I had evidence against me from thence; which, though only by hearsay, might have affected the jury. My defence being such as might have been expected from a weak woman; but such as it was I did not hear it repeated again to

the jury, which I am informed is usual. I however forgive all who have done me wrong, particularly colonel Penruddock; though he told me he could have taken those men before they had come to my house; and I forgive that person who desired me to be taken away from the grand jury to the petty one, that he might be more nearly concerned in my death. As to my conversation with Nelthorp, that could not prejudice me, as it was not until after my conviction and sentence. I acknowledge the king's favour in revoking my sentence, as to the manner of my death; and pray God to preserve him, that he may long reign in mercy as well as justice; that he may long reign in peace, and that the protestant religion may flourish under him." She also returned thanks to God and the reverend clergy, who had assisted her in her imprisonment.

Her death, which so honourably closed her holy and benevolent life, produced such a sensation of compassion, indignation, and alarm through the kingdom, as contributed powerfully to bring down that vengeance which delivered the nation from the fangs of her murderers<sup>m</sup>.

### Mrs. GAUNT.

It would not be fair to pass by another female martyr, who died for her religion at the same time, and by the same guilty hands. Mrs. Gaunt, who is called by Burnet an anabaptist, was an inhabitant of London, where she spent all her time in acts of charity, visiting the poor and the prisoners in jails, without

<sup>m</sup> Burnet's Own Times, vol. I. p. 649. Noble's Biograph. Hist.

confining her attentions to any religious profession. A person of her character was likely to become odious, and thus be singled out as a mark for the arrows of persecution, which then flew thick around the most excellent in the nation. A rebel took refuge in her house, where she concealed him till she should find an opportunity of sending him out of the country: he, with unparalleled baseness, betrayed her, to save his own life, which he learned would be the reward of the treacherous ingratitude. But though the evidence was not sufficient for a legal conviction, she was condemned to be burnt. Pen, the quaker, who saw her die, says bishop Burnet, told me, she laid the straw about her to burn her speedily, and behaved herself in such a manner, that all the spectators melted into tears. With amazing cheerfulness and firmness she said, "I exult that God has honoured me to be the first that is called to suffer by fire in this reign, and that my suffering is a martyrdom for that religion which is all love. Charity, said she, is a part of my religion, as well as faith. My crime is at worst only that of feeding an enemy; so I hope I shall have my reward from him, for whose sake I did this service, how unworthysoever the person was that made so ill a return for it." These bloody tragedies, like those of the first queen Mary, contributed most powerfully to expel for ever from the kingdom the civil and religious tyranny which they were designed to establish".

\* Burnet's Own Times, vol. I. p. 648.

## CHAP. IX.

STATE OF RELIGION IN THE WORLD DURING  
THIS PERIOD.

## SECTION I.

## STATE OF RELIGION IN ENGLAND.

**A**S no accurate judgment can be formed of the temperature of any particular body, without considering that of the surrounding atmosphere, neither can the religion of the dissenters be fairly appreciated, without some attention to the moral and religious state of the people among whom they dwell, and from whom they dissent. From the revolution effected by the long parliament, to that accomplished under the auspices of king William, the public mind endured all the evils which result from sudden and violent alterations of temperature and modes of treatment. Two successive reigns of princes of the house Stewart seem to have been always enough to throw the nation into convulsions. The first two of the name of Charles and James gave the English such a disgust for the debauchery and tyranny of the court, that they tried the rare experiment of committing themselves into the hands of an assembly of divines, which the long parliament might justly be denominated. The nation experienced, indeed, a complete change of manners, but not of morals; the form of religion was altered, but the depravity of human nature remained; so that

the mass of the people soon felt themselves as much pinched by the severe northern air of Scotland, as they had before been relaxed by the gales which blew from the dissolute nations of the continent ; and from this time, the English have been confirmed haters of strict religious restraints. The second Charles and James effectually relieved them from this yoke, and introduced that moral state in which the dissenters found the nation, when first the toleration act gave them a legal existence.

As the character of the ruler usually becomes the model for his subjects, what could be expected from a nation which had now been cursed with four princes of the house of Stewart? The pride of Lucifer was their easily besetting sin, aspiring to the throne of deity, not only to rule with absolute sway, but to rule in the empire of conscience and religion. Disdaining the office of guardian and executor of the laws, they pretended to be themselves the fountain of law and the rule of their own actions, which is the property of only that one being who can neither err nor sin. To such princes, there was no loyalty but absolute submission, so that the touch of their sceptre benumbed and paralysed the moral principle which induces men to act according to the dictates of conscience, as creatures amenable to the higher tribunal of the eternal Judge. Hence the virtuous few, who dared to plead a moral or religious objection to the mandates of power, exposed themselves to ridicule as fanatics, or suspicion as traitors.

The religion of a tyrant is a perfect solecism. The Stewarts, however, were as forward to trouble the nation with their creed, as to impose upon them the royal prerogative for law. Though the two first of



that line, who sat on the British throne, were educated in a severe, unostentatious communion, they quickly exchanged it for a system which seemed to them better adapted to the pomp, servility, and licentiousness of a court. Their characteristic imbecility was dazzled with a splendid ritual, while their superstition regarded a routine of forms as the essence of religion, till by a gradual approximation towards Rome, the last of the race arrived at the honour of a confessor, who forfeited the British crown by laying it at the feet of his holiness. However the English spurned at this consummation of the folly, they entertained too little distaste for its earlier stages, but drank almost to intoxication of the golden cup which the scarlet whore handed round to the nations. That doting upon religious pomp and forms, which is invariably accompanied with a deadly hatred for spiritual religion and true Christian morals, became the confirmed national temper.

Were we to admit the accusations of Milton, in opposition to the general eulogy on the virtues of the first Charles, we should pronounce the whole race of the Stewarts as dissolute in morals as they were arbitrary in politics, and superstitious in religion. Charles the second certainly seemed ambitious of paying honour to the discernment of Cromwell, who said, "he is so damnably debauched he will undo us all again." Nor was his death any antidote to the poisonous influence of his life; for as the priests of James, his successor, were eager to proclaim that he departed a catholic, it was thus publicly avowed that a man might be a true son of that church, out of which there is no salvation, though dying in the arms of a harlot. In the genuine spirit of this communion,

James equally resigned his body to his mistresses, and his conscience to his priests. While the tyrant trampled on the laws, and sported with the liberties and lives of his subjects, the slave kneeled to a shorn confessor, whose ghostly absolution furnished him with a salvo for his crimes.

If the depraved inclinations of men, however restrained, always keep down the tone of morals sufficiently low, to what state of degradation must the public mind and manners be reduced, when vice is fostered by royal smiles, and the very religion of the state serves to render the nation devoutly wicked? As the violation of the marriage-bed poisons society at the source, and to this infectious vice the second Charles and James greedily sold themselves, what wonder that the decencies of life were forgotten or despised; and even ladies of rank and fashion avowed their whoredoms without a blush? To this state of unprincipled, shameless dissolution was our nation advanced, when, by the revolution, it vomited forth the princes who were tyrants to her liberties, jesuits to her religion, and panders to her morals.

Towards the close of James's reign, indeed, all men of the smallest penetration began to anticipate the horrors of a civil war, at which they shuddered; for the nation had not yet forgotten the bitterness of the cup of which they drank so deeply during the contest between Charles and the parliament. In proportion, therefore, as the renewal of the contest between king and people became more certainly inevitable, a serious awe seized the spirits of men. As it was to be a struggle between the catholic and the protestant church, those who adhered to the reformation under every form, felt the opposition which was made to their

religion a stimulus to their zeal. The dissenters having just obtained the freedom of worship, for which they had long sighed in secret, were the more eager to improve it to the utmost, as they had learned its value by its loss, and were aware that the same machiavelian policy which had restored them their right with sinister views, would feel no scruple to ravish it from them again, when the end designed should be completely effected. They were solicitous also to make men too good Christians to be in danger of becoming catholics. At the same time, the established clergy saw that not only their religion was at stake, but their best portions were every day given away to strangers, intruders, and enemies. The lectures against popery which they preached at this eventful crisis, partook of all the energies of their souls, and thus drew the people in multitudes round pulpits which had before been almost forsaken. From these combined causes, both churches and meetings were numerous and regularly attended, and a nation, which had before worn the complexion of pale, sickly indifference to religion, now assumed, for the moment, a vivid hectic flush<sup>o</sup>.

William and Mary brought with them principles and manners calculated to improve the English; but it soon appeared, that a people so deeply debauched were not to be frightened into a sincere love for reformation. A sudden storm rushing down upon the ocean may, almost in a moment, work up its billows to dreadful agitation, but the winds must be lulled many hours before the foaming waves will settle down again to perfect calm. Sometimes the sword of war

<sup>o</sup> Granger's Biographical History of England, vol. IV. p. 301, note.

sweeps away a corrupt generation, and thus prepares the way for a more speedy and effectual reformation of national spirit and manners ; but the bloodless revolution which William effected, left the same race of men to be swayed by his sceptre, as had worshipped the dissolute Charles and the superstitious James. It is, however, of the essence of revolution to throw power into different hands. The most zealous protestants, and those who were the least debauched with the spirit of James' court, were the men who snatched the falling reins of government, and committed them to the hands of William. While those who were on the eve of bartering their religion for that of the sovereign, sympathized with him in his fears, and slunk from notice and from power, those who rose to command were seriously impressed with the awful magnitude of their attempt, and desirous of at least appearing to trust for their success to the approbation of heaven on a righteous cause.

This spirit was cherished by Burnet, a clergyman of some popularity and note, who having fled to Holland from the sword of James now came over with our deliverer, and officiated as his chaplain in the invading army. His services were rewarded by the see of Sarum, and he was called to preach the coronation sermon, when William and Mary were crowned joint sovereigns of these realms. As this discourse is not only a historical and ecclesiastical curiosity, but furnishes a striking specimen of the public temper at this memorable æra, the reader may be gratified by seeing an ample extract.

The text is 2 Samuel xxiii. 3, 4: "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me. He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of

the Lord. And he shall be as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."

"Power without goodness, says the preacher, is the justest object of mens' fear and aversion. An elevation of condition, without a more real dignity inherent in the mind, is only the exposing of those who are clothed with that ill-deserved greatness to a brighter light, by which their defects become more conspicuous. Those who are raised to a high eminence of dignity, are so much the more accountable, both to God and man, not only for all the ill which either they themselves, or others acting in their name or by their example, may have done, but likewise for all the good which they might have done and did not.

David here gives the true measures of government: it is a rule and not an absolute dominion, a rule over men and not a power like that which we have over beasts. Those who manage this power must be just, and act according to the eternal and unalterable rules of truth and goodness.

"Man is born free, and so he has a right to liberty; but he is born likewise with so much frailty in his composition, that he wants conduct, and must be kept under rule. It is a question not easily determined, whether a state of liberty without any restraint, that leaves all men to a full freedom of acting as they please, or a state of restraint that shuts out all liberty is the more miserable of the two. The one makes men beasts of prey; the other makes them beasts of burden. The mean between these two extremes is a just government. To put the frailties of men to trials in their obedience that are above human

patience, to exact of them that which is either impossible or unreasonable, and to carry this rule too far into that which is God's immediate province, I mean *mens' consciences*, all this is not the ruling over men either as men or as Christians. God himself has made his yoke easy, and therefore those who can pretend no higher than to be his vicegerents, should not exceed those limits within which the Author of our being has restrained himself. Undue impositions, and unrelenting severities or rigour in commanding, and a cruelty in punishing, must find patterns elsewhere than in God's governing the world, or Christ's governing the church.

“How well tempered soever our constitution may be, nothing can complete our happiness but the justice of those who rule over us. Just to the whole society, and the constitution of the government, as well as to every individual member of it; not breaking through the limits of their power, nor invading the rights of their people. He understood government well who said, ‘mercy and truth preserve the king, and his throne is upheld by mercy;’ when every man feels the blessing of such a ruler, all men are easy, and every man becomes a guard to the government that finds himself guarded by it.

“But after all, though it is a great happiness when rulers seem to have justice so deeply rooted in their natures, that every act of injustice is as a violence done them, yet unless there is a more lasting principle in them, they will find themselves so beset by corrupt men, that it will not be possible for them to maintain their integrity, if they have not a principle within them of such force that it bears all things down before it, and that is the fear of God. This

will accustom princes to consider, that how much soever they may be raised above their subjects, yet they are as nothing before that God who, as he set them up by his providence, so he can pull them down at his pleasure. He poureth contempt upon princes; and when he blasts the counsels and intends to defeat the designs of the greatest and loftiest monarchs, how easily do crowns fall and thrones shake. This fear of God will make princes often remember, that though they look like gods, yet they must die like men: this prospect will make them think sometimes on the melancholy reflections which the approaches of death will probably raise within them, if they at any time for the increase of their treasure or their power, or for any ambitious and ill design have perverted judgment or denied justice, if they have shed innocent blood, or shut their ears against the cries of the miserable. The remembrance of these things will then raise agonies in their minds, which they will not be able to soften by any of those diversions with which they entertained themselves in their health. The violences which they have committed, and the blood which they have shed, will then stick too close to their thoughts to be easily shaken off by them. Or if they could be so charmed with the sweetness of empire, that it should make them deaf to all clamours in this world, yet as soon as their souls pass out of their bodies, they must leave their crowns and all their glory behind them, and go into a state where all the distinctions that now look so gay and so shining will signify nothing, unless it be to add to their account, and increase their guilt, and to heighten their condemnation. Then they must appear at a tribunal where there is no respect of persons, where the cries

of those widows and orphans whom they either made or oppressed, or at least refused to relieve, will be heard; and every one of those complaints, against which their greatness secured them when on earth, will be weighed in the scales of impartial justice. Then those princes who have hardened themselves against the miseries of mankind, against all that effusion of blood and desolation, with their desire of glory, their ambition, or revenge, occasioned in the unjust wars which they have made, will find that they have a just and righteous God to deal with, that accepteth not the persons of princes, that revenge innocent blood, especially the blood of his saints.

“ It is from you, great sovereigns, that we expect the glorious reverse of all cloudy days. You have been hitherto our hope and our desire; you must now become our glory and crown of rejoicing. Ordinary virtues in you, will fall so far short of our hopes, that we shall be tempted almost to think them vices. It is in your persons, and under your reign, that we hope to see an opening to a glorious scene, which seems approaching. May you not only accomplish, but exceed even our wishes. May you be long happy in one another. May you reign long in your persons, and much longer in a glorious posterity. May you be long the support of the church of God, and the terror of all its enemies. May you be ever happy in obedient subjects, in wise counsellors, and faithful allies. May your fleets be prosperous, and your armies victorious. But may you soon have cause to use neither; by settling, both at home and abroad, a firm and just peace, and by securing the quiet of Europe from those who have so often, with so little regard to the faith of treaties, and now at last



beyond all former examples disturbed it. In order to the obtaining all these blessings, and in conclusion a sure, though a late admittance to the kingdom above, where you shall exchange these crowns with a more lasting, as well as a more glorious one, may not only this auditory, but the whole nation, join with united voices and inflamed hearts, in saying, GOD SAVE KING WILLIAM AND QUEEN MARY."

The attempts to make such alterations in the church of England as would have produced a comprehension of the dissenters within the established pale, and the passing of the toleration act, roused the slumbering tyger. Tories in politics, and high churchmen in religion, poured their execrations on the name of William, as a secret enemy to the church of England. But if we judge from facts, we shall pronounce him her chief benefactor, whose steady and powerful hand raised her up, when staggering under the ill-advised friendship, or the concealed enmity of the Stewarts. Could the purest and most exalted attachments be more effectually displayed, than by placing at the head of the church such prelates as should in future guide her with wiser counsels, feed her with purer doctrines, and defend her with weapons of keener edge and finer temper? Many of the high church prelates unintentionally assisted William to accomplish this object, by refusing to take the oaths of allegiance to him, which gave them the title of non-jurors, and left their sees vacant; which the king, after a time, filled up with the objects of his choice. Dr. Tillotson was prevailed upon to accept the primacy, and was announced archbishop of Canterbury, as Dr. Sharp was of York; so that the archiepiscopal sees were filled by two who were esteemed the best

preachers of their day. Dr. Patrick was made bishop of Ely, and Dr. Moore of Norwich; Dr. Cumberland was raised to the see of Peterborough, Dr. Fowler to that of Gloucester, and Ironside to Hereford; while Grove, Hale, and Haugh were nominated bishops of Chichester, Bristol, and Oxford. In two years the king had made fifteen bishops, who were esteemed the most wise, learned, and exemplary men that had ever filled their respective sees<sup>p</sup>. They created the golden age of episcopacy in England. From the eminence which they command, they equally look down upon their predecessors and successors, for although there were before, and have been since their age, individuals who excelled them, there never was such a collective body of talent and worth as they formed. Feeling the imperious necessity of rendering the establishment respectable, in order to maintain her ascendancy over the dissenters, who were now permitted by the toleration to maintain a more fair competition, they submitted to become preaching bishops, which introduced them to popular acquaintance and esteem, and furnished a counterpoise to the influence of hostile pulpits.

Burnet glories in the superior style of preaching which was now introduced into the establishment, giving it the high praise of a noble, elevated, philosophical eloquence, far surpassing any thing which England had before known. But in all the elegance of Platonic philosophy, or the persuasion of Ciceroian eloquence, Howe and Bates had long before outstripped the most admired of these prelates; while they kept at a religious distance from the barrenness of Christian doctrine and the prevalence of heathen

<sup>p</sup> Burnet's Own Times, vol. II. p. 76.

ethics, which, from the preachers of those times, has become the fashion of the church of England.

The new bishops, however, endured much hatred and opposition for their diligence in preaching and visiting their dioceses, their mortified habits and serious exhortations, their attempts to support the establishment, by attention to her improvement and moderation to dissenters, which were all deemed then so many marks of puritanism, as they would now be termed symptoms of methodism. The establishment was divided between those who wished to drive on with violence in the same career which commenced at the restoration, and those who had seen so much of the tendency of that impious spirit as to long to retrace their steps, and return nearer to the sobriety of the interregnum. This latter party had the power of the nation in their own hands, though they had to contend with its prejudices, which must have been deeply offended when they proclaimed by authority those truths, which would not long before, in the reign of James or Charles, have been branded as puritanical aspersions on the established church, or seditious reflections on the king's government.

The bishop of Sarum, in a fast sermon, preached before their majesties, owns, that prayer had been generally despised and neglected, that seeking the Lord was so much abused in the last age by enthusiastic people, that many have thought the best way to avoid such excesses, was to lay aside the duty entirely; that earnest and frequent applications to the throne of grace, to which there are so many promises annexed in Scripture, are little known, and seem to be so much out of the world, that perhaps any expression that might look that way would be

thought cant. It was also equally acknowledged that irreligion had become the parent of immorality, and that the grossest profaneness had polluted the country during the late reigns. Two years after the revolution, queen Mary, during the absence of her husband, addressed a letter to the justices of the peace in the county of Middlesex for the suppression of profaneness and debauchery, cursing and swearing, profanation of the Lord's-day, drunkenness, lewd and disorderly practices, which, says her majesty, by a long and continued neglect and connivance of the magistrates and officers concerned have universally spread themselves. Not long after, the house of commons addressed the king, thanking him for the concern he had expressed at the immoral state of the realm, and beseeching him to issue out his royal proclamation for the suppression of vice, and the strict execution of the laws against profaneness; with which the king immediately complied, including also in his proclamation a severe prohibition of the heretical books which then abounded.

In aid of these royal efforts, several private associations were formed, which were afterwards well known by the title of "the societies for the reformation of manners." An account of their nature and origin was published in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-nine, with the approbation and signature of many of the lords spiritual and temporal, and seven of the judges. From this high authority, we learn that five or six private gentlemen, deeply affected with the depraved and dissolute state of the nation, engaged in an attempt to stem the torrent by the strict execution of the laws. They at first endured what every wise man would expect, the scornful

opposition of the profane, and the censures of the lukewarm on their officious zeal; but their numbers were soon augmented by valuable accessions, and having laid their design before the queen, by means of the bishop of Worcester, they received the warmest testimonies of royal approbation, and the sanction, not only of a letter of thanks to the zealous individuals who had formed the society, but of a recommendatory letter to the magistrates of Middlesex exhorting them to countenance the design.

The original handful were at last increased to a large society, consisting of persons eminent in the law, members of parliament, and justices of the peace, as well as the principal citizens of London, among whom dissenters were united with members of the establishment. They held frequent meetings to devise the best methods of effecting a general reformation, and by a fund raised from the contributions of none but their own body, they defrayed the expences attending the prosecution of some thousands of persons, for swearing, drunkenness, and profanation of the Lord's-day. A great part of the kingdom was roused to emulate their conduct, so that most of the principal towns in the kingdom had a reformation society.

A second society was formed in London of about fifty persons, tradesmen, and others, who principally laboured for the suppression of lewdness, in which they so far succeeded as to shut up about five hundred disorderly houses, and bring to punishment several thousands of profane persons, of whom they published printed lists, which must have provoked them to fury if not to shame. The courts of justice gave them all possible encouragement, and the

lord mayor and the court of aldermen assisted in the good work.

A third society was formed to render the office of constable respectable, and effectually to provide, that their oaths of office should be religiously kept. The fourth body, which was called the corner stone of the building, associated to give information to the magistrates, so that it was asserted, "the name of an informer is now become much more glorious among wise and good men, than it was grown contemptible by the ill practices of some in our days. It does therefore appear truly honourable for persons of the first quality to give information in these cases, for the service of the most high God, as some among us of greater ranks, than the world perhaps thinks of, have of late done." Eight other societies were formed of housekeepers and officers in London, Westminster, and Southwark, differing in their regulations, but aiming at the same object.

In addition to these associations, which attended only to the moral conduct of the nation, which they sought to reform by the strict execution of the laws, five and thirty religious societies were formed in London and its vicinity to seek, by the spiritual weapons of prayer, religious conversation, and works of charity, the same important object, striking at the root of immorality in the irreligious principles and dispositions of the people. Similar religious associations were formed in various parts of England and Ireland, especially in Dublin, where they were joined by bishops and the inferior clergy. They met frequently to read the Scriptures and pray, to sing psalms, and to exchange mutual instruction and reproof by religious conversation. They raised con-

tributions for the relief of indigent housekeepers, to support their children at schools, for the relief of poor debtors, for the support of lectures and daily prayers in the parish churches. The queen took a lively interest in these societies, often inquired how they went on, and was much delighted to hear of their prosperity. They were considered as a grand support to those who had associated for the reformation of manners; who received also additional countenance by the formation of a society of ministers of the established church, and another of justices of the peace.

They are said to have made great progress, so as visibly to improve the face of society. Seventy or eighty warrants were executed in a week upon a new made act of parliament against cursing and swearing. Thousands of lewd persons in those parts of London, which were frequented by prostitutes, were imprisoned, fined, and whipped, and forty or fifty of those miserable females sent to Bridewell in a week. Two sermons were preached in London every quarter, and many of them were printed, in recommendation of the object of the societies, which, after encountering virulent opposition, became, for such a cause, extremely popular.

It will be easily seen, that only those of the societies which confined their attention to moral conduct and the execution of the laws could admit of the co-operation of dissenters. In these, however, there appeared the happiest union of heart among those who had hitherto appeared in opposite lists. But this gave the profane multitude opportunity to malign the whole plan as puritanic, and to revile all those who joined in the societies as presbyterians; for those, who think a religion good for nothing, which does not

allow them to curse and swear, to drink and whore, will make no scruple of giving the nick-name of presbyterian or methodist even to bishops, who would join with other denominations in seeking to promote the interests of morality or catholic religion. The abuse which the high-church mob poured on the members of the societies, and the insolence with which they treated even magistrates, clergymen, and prelates, who attempted to suppress their darling vices<sup>1</sup>, might teach all men the true cause of the fury which these sort of churchmen have frequently shewn against puritans, dissenters, or methodists. This opposition wearied out many who were at first zealous in the good cause, and when, as the next reign advanced, the countenance of the great was much withdrawn, the societies declined, and the mobs were again indulged in their love of sin and persecution.

But the societies which were purely religious, were more unequivocally laudable, and thus became more useful and permanent. Many of the poor wretches, who were prosecuted to stripes, bonds, and imprisonment, had been bred up in ignorance of true religion, the only genuine source of morals, neglected by those who were paid by the state to watch for their souls, and taught by their established pastors to abhor the most virtuous men as hypocrites and schismatics; so that the grapes of Sodom were all the fruit that could be expected from the wretched culture which their minds had received. The praise of good intention is certainly due to those who associated to execute the laws against profaneness, but far higher honours belong to those who united to intercede for the transgressors in the court above, rather than to appear

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry's Life, p. 52.



against them in the courts below ; who sought to disseminate that knowledge of religion, which alone can cure the evils of society ; and who, by dispersing some thousands of religious treatises among the ignorant and wicked, were likely to do them more good than by a host of informers and constables. These religious societies supplied the loss of that intimate communion which Christians enjoy with each other in the churches of the dissenters, but of which they were almost totally deprived in the establishment. As they continued till the rise of methodism, and contributed to that important event, they will demand the notice of the reader in the next period of our work.

The religion of the country, after the revolution, was also greatly promoted by queen Mary, who was the more regarded as she was thought to give her husband his right to the crown, and not only was acknowledged by the parliament joint sovereign with him, but also frequently held alone the reins of administration, while William was absent from the kingdom. She gave to the nation an example of devotion more than royal, which was placed beyond the suspicion of hypocrisy, by such conversation and manners as set calumny herself at defiance. Her charities were unbounded, and her industry and œconomy of time banished from the court its former frivolous pursuits, which she exchanged for profitable reading and needle-work. This drew upon her the hatred of many of her sex, who affected to think her only fit for the needle, or the distaff ; but it was universally acknowledged, that no impartial person ever left her presence without being charmed with

her conversation ; and William, who was not accustomed to give extravagant eulogies, used to say, that she would find the way to manage the English though he could not.

The benevolence and devotion of a saint, she armed with the courage and firmness of a hero. Deeply aware of all the awful magnitude of the revolution which her husband undertook to effect, she was satisfied with the approbation which her conscience pronounced on the attempt, and cheerfully resigned the event to the providence of God. When William was in Ireland with the army, and the French fleet on the coast of England, she astonished all around her with her devout fortitude, as well as prudent counsels. But in the height of her usefulness, when her example was beginning to produce the most desirable effects, while she was the soul of the religious societies and of every other excellent object, she was seized with the small pox. The patriots in the state, and the friends of the church of God, among all classes of protestants, had hoped that she, who was considered as possessing the best right to the throne, would, from her superior health, survive her husband ; but the malignant disease snatched her from their attachments and hopes, on the twenty-eighth of December, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-four, in the the thirty-third year of her age, and the sixth of her reign.

During her illness, she was more than resigned, for, abounding in exercises of devotion, and saying nothing did her good but prayer, she expressed an earnest desire to depart. Her death produced a genuine national mourning. The king was thrown into paroxysms of anguish, which astonished those

who knew his phlegmatic constitution. His attendants at first thought he would have followed her into the eternal world, and for some time he was incapable of business, declaring, that, from the happiest, he was, by this stroke, rendered the most miserable of men. As she was peculiarly dear to dissenters, Mr. John Howe preached a funeral sermon at the time of her interment, in which he poured forth all the eloquence of a great soul wrought up to the strongest emotions. "Ours," says he, "was a mourning not more grievous than just to the English nation, that is, to those who are both of English soul and genius. There is a sort of people, as was once said, born to slavery. To them this season of sorrow is a time of festivity and laughter, but without serious repentance, theirs is like to prove the sardonic laughter, the certain prelude of death and ruin. But 'tis to be hoped, this sort of men do dwindle into an insignificant paucity.

"Our mourning was by all the estates of the kingdom, the head only mourning with greater and more decent majesty in retirement, or being (as is usual in more solemn mournings) hid and covered on that day. Death marched in state and triumph on that day; the king of terrors took the throne, and filled that part which it had made vacant, having plucked away from thence not only so bright an ornament, but so glorious an instrument in our government, and all the orders of the realm as captives attended the chariot of the conqueror. England had lost its delight, even half of its soul. Nothing could correspond to such a case, but a national groan, as of a half-expiring kingdom.

"How great was her reverence for the Deity

One might as soon divert the course of the sun, as turn her from her daily course in religious duties. I cannot here omit her reverential regard for the Lord's-day, which at the Hague I had a very particular occasion to take notice of. On a Saturday, a vessel (the *pacquet* boat) was stranded not far from thence, which, lying very near the shore, I viewed, happening to be thereabouts at that time, till the last passengers were brought safe off. Multitudes went to see it, and her highness being informed of it said, she was willing to see it too, but thought she should not, for it was then too late for that evening, and she reckoned by Monday it would be shivered to pieces (though it remaining entire till then, she was pleased to view it that day); but she resolved, she added, she should not give so ill an example as to go to see it on the Lord's-day.

“Next to her exemplary piety towards God, shone with a second lustre her most amiable benignity towards men, and particularly towards them whom she judged pious, of whatever persuasion. She hath divers times expressed her acceptance, value, and desire of their prayers, whom she knew in some modes of worship to differ from her. She was not inaccessible to such of her subjects whose dissentient judgment in such things put them into lower circumstances. Her singular humility adorned all the rest. Speaking once of a good thing which she intended, she added, but of myself I can do nothing, and somewhat being said by one then present, for there were only two others then in company with her, she answered, she hoped God would help her.” The person who made this answer to her was, most probably, Mr. Howe himself, who had access to the

court of king William, both in Holland, and after his accession to the throne of England; and who speaks from his own knowledge of the excellencies of the queen. While it would be difficult to find such another instance of genuine religion on the British throne, this exalted princess sighed over her incapacity to effect what she devoutly wished. All parties seemed to unite in her praises, except the fiery non-jurors, who were so blinded by barbarous prejudices, that they could see nothing in her worthy of respect but the blood of the Stewarts, which, in their esteem, was defiled by alliance to William, and by sharing with him in occupying the vacant throne of the exiled king. The spirit of this party may be seen in the text on which a non-juring clergyman chose to preach a funeral sermon for this most Christian queen: "Go, see, now this cursed woman, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter".

The morality of their religion was soon after publicly displayed. Several persons had been engaged by James to assassinate king William; but as James's policy or fortune were seldom better than his morals, the conspiracy was detected, and several of the assassins executed. Robert Charnock, one of the two fellows of Magdalen-college who, in the reign of king James, turned papists, seemed perfectly well satisfied with the lawfulness of the deed which he had attempted to perpetrate, and for which he was hanged at Tyburn. But sir John Friend, and sir William Perkins, who were condemned to die for the same crime, not having changed their religion, were attended to the place of execution by three non-juring protestant clergymen, who united in giving them

\* 2 Kings ix. 34.

solemn absolution, with imposition of hands, in the presence of the multitude'. "A strain of impudence," says Burnet, "as new as it was wicked, since these persons died owning the ill designs they had been engaged in, and expressing no sort of repentance for them." One of the clergymen was Collier, author of the *View of the English Stage*, whose religion would have suited the cells of La Trappe. The two archbishops, and twelve bishops, signed a declaration containing a severe censure on the performance of this office of the church, without a previous confession of the heinous crime for which the criminals died. But Collier replied to the prelates, with the spirit of a man who was confident of the goodness of his cause, and maintained, against all objectors, that the absolution which they gave was in every respect unexceptionable.

For, whatever may be thought of their understandings, the sincerity of many of the non-jurors was proved by many costly sacrifices. Eight bishops, at the head of whom was Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, resigned their sees, and sunk down into obscurity and comparative poverty and disgrace, for retaining their attachment to James so far as to refuse to take the oaths to king William. Several of them had before been sent to the tower by king James, and it must be confessed, that they all shone brighter in affliction than in prosperity. As these prelates moved and promoted the toleration act, it is not improbable that they had in view a separate worship, according to the forms of the church of England, but pure from all those who had polluted themselves with taking the oaths to the new government. As

\* Burnet's Own Times, vol. II. p. 172.

the bishops were imitated by many of the inferior clergy, who lost their benefices for their attachment to James, a schism in the establishment was created; for many of these highest churchmen became practical dissenters, by setting up congregations apart from those supported by the state; which, however, lasted no longer than the lives of those who first formed the division. The party received a severe mortification, when the celebrated Sherlock, master of the temple, who had for some time resolutely refused to take the oaths, at length submitted, and publicly vindicated his conduct, at the expence of all those who still refused to acknowledge the existing powers'. He was rewarded for his obedience by the rich deanery of St. Pauls, and tormented for his apostasy by the worrying wit of Dr. South.

\* Dr. Sherlock's wife was supposed to have persuaded him to enjoy the sweets of submission to the government; so that when an arch bookseller saw him handing his wife along St. Paul's Church-yard he said, there goes Dr. Sherlock, with his reasons for taking the oaths at his fingers ends. But as he did not submit to William till after the battle of the Boyne had established his throne, so his son, who was afterwards bishop of London, preached a loyal revolutionary sermon, the Sunday after the battle of Preston had confirmed the authority of the house of Hanover; which led the benchers at the temple to say, it was a pity it had not been delivered at least the Sunday before, and produced the following epigram:

As Sherlock the elder with his jure divine,  
Did not comply, till the battle of Boyne;  
So Sherlock the younger, still made it a question,  
Which side he would take, till the battle of Preston.

It has, however, been affirmed, that it was the event of the battle of Aghrim for which he waited; that he had a friend on the spot to write to him immediately, and as soon as he heard that Giukle was victorious he took the oaths.

In many of the non-jurors was displayed the perversity of protestantism ; for their religion associated idolatrous attachment to forms and rites, superstitious reverence for a supposed antiquity, priestly importance and domination over conscience, with liberal indulgences for sin. The name of protestants, which was almost all that distinguished them from papists, gave them greater scope for action, which they diligently improved, by diffusing the poison of bigotry, malice, and superstition. That such men should be partial to James is not wonderful ; for it was but a short and easy step from their religion to his, and as he must have been, in their eyes, very excusable for stepping across the faint, and almost imperceptible line of demarcation ; so, when on the other side, he must have appeared to them a nearer neighbour than many of the protestants, with whom they were surrounded. But as such men abounded, during this and the following reigns, they kept the public mind in a state of acetous fermentation.

The injury to religion was still further increased by the number of clergymen, who took the oaths, indeed, and concurred in every act of compliance with the government, but evidently with such mental reservations as tended to destroy the sanction of an oath, and expose religion, through its ministers, to the scoff of infidels. " They were not only cold in serving the government, says my lord of Sarum, but they were always blaming the administration and aggravating its misfortunes."

Amidst this cloudy scene of ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, and impiety, the mind is relieved by a faint gleam of Christian charity. From the voluntary associations for reformation of manners grew those



for the promotion of religion ; and out of these, again, was formed what has since been known by the name of the Society for promoting Christian knowledge. This body had extended its labours beyond its original object, and sent books to America and the West Indies, where also it supported some clergymen as missionaries. But king William, perceiving the importance of this field, in the year one thousand seven hundred and one, incorporated the archbishops, several of the bishops, numbers of the nobility, gentry, and inferior clergy, including all the members of the former society, under the name of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign parts. By its charter, the society was authorised to use a common seal, and to meet annually, on the third Friday in February, to choose a president and officers for the ensuing year. They are obliged to present an account annually to the lord Chancellor, or some other great officer of state, of their receipts and disbursements. Large contributions were raised by many of the bishops and clergy, who took up the business with great zeal, and sent missionaries to the British colonies in America, and the West Indies, and afterwards assisted the Danish missions on the Malabar coast.

But darkness, in all its horrors, not only struggled against the light, but gave opportunity to many an *ignis fatuus* to mislead the unwary. Socinianism and deism rose up to public notice under the shelter of the toleration act. Mr. Thomas Firmin, an eminent citizen of London, who died in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-eight, was considered as the champion of the socinians, though Burnet says he was in reality an arian. He had made no

scruple to avow his heterodoxy before the revolution; but it was not till after that event had proclaimed a jubilee to free thinking that he laboured to propagate his sentiments.

As he was wealthy and liberal, he dispersed many books against the Trinity, which called forth many treatises in defence of that doctrine. But, unhappily, the defenders of the faith, not contented with executing their original design of parrying the thrusts of enemies, undertook to state and explain the mystery in various ways, which set them at war among themselves, as well as exposed a broad and defenceless front to the attacks of the socinians. Sherlock and South, engaged in fierce contest, and brought their private and personal enmities into the public controversy. The high-church clergy appeared prodigiously alarmed at the danger of socinianism, and heavily accused the whigs, who were favourable to free enquiry, of a design to overthrow the church. As archbishop Tillotson had been very intimate with Mr. Firmin, he was exposed to the severest reflections from those of his brethren, who loved an opportunity to malign so moderate a prelate even more than they hated Mr. Firmin and socinianism.

The deists, who were increasing in numbers, or in boldness, were delighted with the zeal of the socinians, and the conflicts of the trinitarians. One of the learned among the infidels remarked, that he was sure the divines who defended the Trinity would be too hard for the socinians in proving the doctrine from Scripture, but then they hoped this would only lead men to cast off the authority of the writings which inculcated doctrines they were determined to reject. It became fashionable to deride mysteries,

as the tricks of priestcraft to hoodwink the vulgar. Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke were now "hatching the cockatrice egg, which afterwards broke out into a fiery flying serpent." The parliament most unwisely interfered, and in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-four, ordered a socinian pamphlet, called, a Dialogue concerning the Deity, or a Brief Confutation of the Doctrine of the Trinity, to be burnt by the common hangman, and a prosecution to be instituted against the author, printer, and publisher. The same folly was repeated, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-eight, when the whole house of commons marched, with the speaker at their head, to request king William to issue his royal proclamation for putting in execution the good laws now in force against profaneness and immorality, and that he would give effectual orders for the suppression of all pernicious books against the holy Trinity. They enacted also, with the concurrence of the upper house, that if any person educated in the Christian religion, should deny it to be true, or the Scriptures to be of divine authority, or impugn the doctrine of the holy Trinity, he shall be incapable of holding any office or place of trust; and for the second offence, be disabled from bringing any action, or from acting as guardian, executor, legatee, or purchaser of lands, and suffer three years imprisonment without bail. This was the most effectual method of betraying the doctrine of the Trinity and the Christian religion to the scorn and abhorrence of enemies, while it gave an awful example of a retrograde step in the reign of William, which was followed by many long strides under his successor. It was political popery, which is more indefensible

than the spiritual tyranny over the judgments and consciences of men, which is exercised by professed divines in the Roman conclave. But William now imagined it necessary to throw himself into the arms of the tories, who made it a condition of their undertaking the administration, that a convocation, which was loudly called for, should be allowed to sit. As soon, however, as they were assembled, the clergy of the lower house, who were most intoxicated with the circean mixture of love to hierarchical domination and hatred to sectarian liberties, gave the most shameful proofs, that their party was the fruit of their passions and their pride, rather than their principles; for, with the spirit of presbyterians, they opposed the bishops, disputing every inch of ground with those whom they had affected to consider as the only legitimate authority in the church. On the bishop of Sarum, who had always been obnoxious to them, and now warmly opposed their rebellion against the prelates, they took revenge by attacking the exposition of the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, which Burnet had lately published.

With these conflicts the nation was agitated, and while truth and goodness were forgotten, licentiousness of opinions, manners, and passions gave an ominous hue to public affairs. Though the toleration, which had now existed eleven years, preserved an appearance of quiet (for dissenters and the rulers of the church were liberal towards each other), there were many of the clergy who, fatigued with the calm, sighed again to mount the whirlwind, and point the lightning of the storm. While the best interests of men and Christians were thus declining, William, the

terror of popery and tyrants, fell by the shafts of the king of terrors.

Burnet, who knew him intimately for sixteen years, gives the following character of his religion. "He believed the truth of Christianity very firmly, and he expressed a horror at atheism, and blasphemy; for though there was much of both in his court, it was always denied and concealed from his notice. He was most exemplarily decent and devout in the public exercises of the worship of God. He was an attentive hearer of sermons, and was constant in his prayers and in reading the Scriptures. When he spoke of religious matters, which he did not often, it was with a becoming gravity. He was much possessed with the belief of absolute decrees, declaring to me, that he did not see how the belief of Providence could be maintained on any other supposition. His indifference to the forms of church government, and his zeal for toleration, together with his cold behaviour to the clergy, gave them generally very ill impressions of him". Mark Noble, who is not too much a Williamite, asserts, that "his death was in perfect accord with the heroic character he sustained through life."

The decease of William emboldened many a mean and malignant animal to display his asinine courage in kicking at the fallen lion, and braying out an indecent joy at the death of him whose life had made them tremble. "In their drunken clubs, the jacobites drank healths to Sorrel, the horse from which his majesty received the fatal fall, and some of them went so far as to celebrate the praises of the brute in a Latin epigram, which, if it have any wit, has a great deal

\* Burnet's Own Times.

more of malice \*.” Their fury was provoked to still more indecent excess, when the bishop of Norwich published a book of prayers used by his majesty, which he prefaced with these words, “ the prayers are faithfully printed without the least variation from the original papers which his majesty constantly used. They comprehend all the things for which a Christian ought to pray. By their being made public, men will see the high regard which his majesty had for the duties of the Christian religion, and how well he employed himself at the Lord’s table. There is also very good reason to believe, that he made use of some of these prayers every morning and evening, when he retired into his closet to pray, in which daily devotions, they, who had the honour to attend his person, well knew that he was most constant and regular.” The curses which the tories poured upon these prayers, and upon the presbyterian bishop, as they called him, who edited them, as well as the loud complaints that the king would not declare that he died in the communion of the church of England, but professed himself of the reformed church in general, drew forth a satyrical defence of the monarch, entitled, “ Royal Religion, or an Inquiry into the Piety of Princes,” in which the anonymous author chastised the jacobites with a scourge of scorpions.

Soon after the accession of Anne, in the year one thousand seven hundred and two, a sermon was preached by one Dr. Binks, before the lower house of convocation, on the thirtieth of January, when he drew a parallel between the blessed martyr Charles and Jesus Christ, in which the king was preferred to

\* Bennet’s Memorial of the Reformation, p. 353.

the Saviour. "If," says the loyal preacher, "the dignity of the person to have been king of the Jews ought to have secured our Saviour from violence, here is also one, not only born to a crown, but actually possessed of it. He was not only called king by some, and at the same time derided by others for being so called, but he was actually acknowledged by all to be a king. He was not just dressed up for an hour or two in purple ornaments, and saluted with a hail king, but the usual robes of majesty were his customary apparel. His subjects owned him to be their king, and yet they brought him before a tribunal, they judged him, they condemned him. Our Saviour's declaring his kingdom not to be of this world, might look like a sort of renunciation of his temporal sovereignty, but here was indisputable right of sovereignty both by the laws of God and man. He was the reigning prince and Lord's anointed, and yet in despite of all law, human and divine, he was, by direct force of arms and the most daring methods of a flagrant rebellion and violence, deprived at once of his imperial crown and life." The lords voted that there were some expressions in the said sermon which gave just offence and scandal to all Christian people; and it was ordered, that the vote should be communicated to his diocesan, the bishop of Lincoln and Coventry, in order that he might be proceeded against accordingly. Thus an assembly of lay-lords was shocked with the impiety of this harangue, though the reverend, the clergy in convocation assembled, had heard it with devout approbation. When we reflect that the spirit which this blasphemous parallel breathes, was popular, and that multitudes would applaud the man who dared to pre-

fer his prince to his Saviour and his God, the mind is filled with horror and anguish at the religion of such a people.

In perfect consonance with the worst part of her subjects, the queen betrayed so much weakness and superstition, as to revive, in the year one thousand seven hundred and three, the ludicrous farce of touching for the king's evil. The mother of the celebrated Dr. Johnson presented him, when two years old, before the queen, who, for the first time, performed that office on him, and communicated, no doubt, all the healing virtue which she possessed, but left the child still a prey to this obstinate and melancholy disorder<sup>7</sup>. As if there had been a refined plan for exposing religion to contempt, and rendering the established forms of prayer ridiculous, an office to be used on the solemn occasion was composed, and inserted in the liturgy. "One Bernard, first surgeon to the queen, who had often made this precious foolery the subject of his satire, being reminded of his jests, said with a fleer, really one could not have thought it, if one had not seen it<sup>8</sup>." Can we suppose that the actors in this farce, where the impiety rivalled the nonsense, seriously believed the miraculous efficacy of the royal touch, so as to compose with sincere devotion, the prayer which was to implore the blessing of heaven on the occasion? How justly then might the deists, who were now learning from Shaftesbury to sharpen the weapons of ridicule, despise the understandings of such men, and treat, with sovereign contempt, their belief in miracles. Or was it, on the other hand, all solemn grimace? Did they laugh in

<sup>7</sup> Murphy's Life of Dr. Johnson, prefixed to his works, vol. I. p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Bejsham's History of England, vol. I. p. 180.



lawn at the capacious faith of the vulgar, who could credit these mysterious virtues of royalty? How callous, then, must have been their consciences who could thus sport with the Deity! On either supposition, men of sense and piety in the establishment must have blushed for their communion which received this public insult, and sighed over the moral degradation of their brethren.

The miseries and wickedness of the times were increased by those restless spirits who blew up the flames of contention between the dissenters and the establishment, and between high church and low. The bitter reflections which were thrown out against the occasional conformity of dissenters, as a profanation of the sacrament, shewed that, in the common estimation, holiness consisted in conformity to the religion of the state; for these men, whose delicate sense of purity was so shocked to see a dissenter at the altar, however virtuous his character, could see no evil in the test act, which obliged drunkards and adulterers to profane the sacred table in order to qualify themselves for a civil office.

The disputes between the upper and lower houses of convocation, which ran very high, produced the distinction of high church and low church. All who treated the dissenters with moderation, and resided constantly at their cures, labouring there with diligence and purity of character, were represented as secret favourers of presbytery, ill affected to the church, and were called false brethren. From these it was confidently affirmed, the church was in danger. Those who vociferated the cry, while their passions were heated with infernal fires, fed by selfishness and pride, and kept alive by the blasts of hatred and strife,

fancied that their hearts were the altar of God, burning with the pure flame of holy zeal. The effects of the senseless roar were—a disposition to substantiate the charge by inventing crimes for the sectaries—a malignant grudging at the happiness which others enjoyed in consequence of religious freedom—an itch for handling the sword of persecution, in order to place the church out of the reach of danger, because beyond the competition of rivals, that, having made all around a silent desert, they might call it peace. Though this war-whoop might not succeed so far as to produce persecution to imprisonment or blood; in the estimation of the eternal Judge, the raging of malignant passions is chargeable with the guilt of murder. As the dissenters had formed churches all over the kingdom, were found in almost every town, village and hamlet, and well understood the ultimate design of the cry, it is evident the social intercourse of Englishmen must have been poisoned with deadly animosities.

Meanwhile, popery was said to be much on the increase, especially in Lancashire, where the laity and priests were accused of great insolence, so that a bill to suppress them was brought into the commons. But they were thought to have employed their money in such weighty arguments with the members of parliament, that the bill was dropped. That the church of Rome, which has usually been well served both in the cabinet and in the field, should seize the present opportunity for action was natural, for many, especially among the clergy, seemed on tip-toe for Rome\*. Dr. Hicks, who was at the head of the jacobites, published several books which inculcated the popish

\* Burnet, vol. II. p. 603.

notion of a proper sacrifice in the Lord's supper, and laboured in various ways to soften down the tone of the public abhorrence against popery. Dr. Brett, also, preached a sermon, not merely once, but delivered it in several of the parish churches in London, "in which he pressed the necessity of priestly absolution in a strain beyond what was pretended to, even in the church of Rome. He said that no repentance could serve without it; and affirmed, that the priest was vested with the same power of pardoning that our Saviour himself had." The reader will see the necessity of giving this account in the words of the bishop who here furnishes the history of his own times. For, when it is considered that, according to this doctrine, a true penitent might sink into hell because the priest, who should have given him absolution before his departure, happened to be gone to the chase; when it is affirmed that this priest, who blasphemously exalted himself to a level with the great God our Saviour, was encouraged to preach his papistical sermon in several of the pulpits of the metropolis, and afterwards to publish it from the press; when, to crown all, we hear that the motion which was made in convocation to censure the preacher was rejected; the whole sounds so much like the incredible slander of a malignant foe to the establishment, that nothing short of the evidence of a cotemporary, a friend, a bishop could give it credibility. But what must have been the religious state of London, which could patronize such preaching? And what the spirit and sentiments of the established clergy, when their representatives in convocation allowed such a sermon to go forth to the world as the wholesome doctrine of the church of England?

In pursuit of the same plan of priestly exaltation, it was affirmed, that no baptism, except by persons episcopally ordained, was valid; and that, without receiving this sacrament, the souls of men were not immortal. Books were dispersed through the country to prove the necessity of re-baptizing the dissenters, who were said to be no Christians, but in a state of damnation; though, according to Dodwell's ravings, the utmost they had to fear was annihilation. How many were persuaded to be re-baptized, in order to receive immortal souls from those who scarcely seemed to have rational souls, we are not informed; but the bishops, ashamed of these bedlamite dogmas of their clergy, prepared a declaration, that no baptism in or with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit should be reiterated: they could not, however, pass it through the lower house of convocation.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and six the French prophets, as they were called, strongly attracted the public attention. The professions of inspiration which prevailed among the French protestants in the Cevennes will be noticed in a future section; but it is necessary to observe here, that the cruel persecutions, which these people endured from the sectarian bigotry which Louis the fourteenth displayed for the soi-disant catholic church, naturally turned their attention towards the prospects of deliverance which the sacred Scriptures afforded, and thus produced a predilection for the Revelations and the prophetic parts of Scripture. From applying these predictions to their own case, they found that it was easy to slide into a profession of being inspired

to utter new ones; which they appear to have been satisfied were from the same source, and of equal authority with those of the New Testament. Under the supernatural impulse of this spirit, which animated numerous assemblies, and produced oracular warnings and instructions from multitudes of girls and boys, as well as women and soldiers, the persecuted protestants rushed upon their enemies, and wrought such prodigies of valour, that Louis felt himself necessitated to send against them at last the celebrated Marshal Villars, who, at the head of a numerous well appointed army, judged it prudent to treat with the rebels, and to allow them very advantageous terms in order to induce them to lay down their arms.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and seven a book was published in London, entitled, "a Cry from the Desert, or Testimonies of the miraculous Things lately come to pass in the Cevennes, verified on oath, with a Preface by John Lacy, esq." For, the war being terminated in France, several of the leaders of the French protestants came into England; and this Mr. Lacy tells the world that he has seen Mr. Boissier, Mr. Elias Marion, Mr. Fage, and Mr. Cavalier who was the most redoubted champion of the Huguenots, whom they called David, and from these persons received an account of the inspiration which had prevailed among them in France, and that they assured him they were ordered by the same Spirit to come into England. Mr. Marion, however, having published some predictions which were supposed to be ominous and alarming to England, a violent persecution was excited against him, and the French prophets. Marion, Fage, and Cavalier were censured

as impostors by the consistory of the French protestant church, at the Savoy, in London, on the fifth of January, in the year one thousand seven hundred and six, and were by the French churches excluded from their communion at the Lord's supper. But Elias Marion persisted in asserting that he was ordered by the Spirit to come to London, where he received the warnings which he was further commanded to publish. About four or five hundred of these are contained in a book, entitled, "the prophetic Warnings of Elias Marion, heretofore one of the commanders of the Protestants in the Cevennes, or Discourses uttered by him in London, under the Operation of the Spirit, and faithfully taken in writing whilst they were spoken." The events which happened in France, cannot be more inexplicable than these writings are rhapsodical. He would deserve credit for no ordinary patience who could wade through the book, which presents no honourable credentials for the new prophets. Their predictions are delivered piecemeal; one scrap being directed against persecutors, with Babylon or Rome at their head, another being addressed to the saints with assurances of deliverance. Terrible vengeance is threatened to the wicked, and glorious promises are made to the church of speedy triumph over its enemies, with the establishment of the millennial state. The prophets profess to be inspired to give warning of these approaching events to all the world, beginning with England; and they declare, that the grand changes are to happen within three years.

They are said to have pretended to be miraculously endued with the knowledge of various languages, to

possess the power of healing diseases, and of imparting the same spirit to others by the laying on of their hands. They certainly profess, in their publications, to be endued with the power of discerning spirits. To prove their inspiration they appeal to the holy joy which filled them, the gift of prayer which they received, and the miraculous answers afforded to their prayers.

But to crown all, they offered to raise the dead, and "even, says Voltaire, any dead person, which the doubtful might choose to require." "The English ministry adopted, says he, the method which we should always pursue with men of miracles; they permitted them to try, on May the twenty-fifth, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight, in the church-yard of St. Paul's cathedral. Every thing was conducted with the solemnity of a trial; the place was surrounded with guards; and after having attempted to raise the corpse of Dr. Emes, a physician, as he refused to obey their summons, the affair ended with putting the prophets in the pillory."

But other historians seem to give all the honour of this bold attempt to John Lacy, esq. The government, however, was about to improve this disappointment, by crushing the new sect with the arm of power; but after having given orders to the attorney-general to prosecute sir Richard Bulkely and other ringleaders of the party, they sent a gentleman to consult Dr. Calamy, an eminent dissenting minister, who had preached and published, "A Caveat against the new Prophets:" he advised not to use any severities against them, but to let them alone. The ruling powers were wise enough to follow this advice, and

the party dwindled into nothing. Voltaire, therefore, was actuated by his characteristic hatred for spiritual religion, when he asserted, that the presbyterians in England joined the French prophets, out of hatred to the establishment which they anathematised. Some individuals, indeed, among the dissenters, became converts to these foreign enthusiasts; but they were censured and excluded from the churches to which they belonged; whilst many, who were not dissenters, joined the prophets, and received, as far as appears, no episcopal censures. Dr. Calamy's advice concerning the deluded men, reflects no dishonour on the judgment or spirit of the presbyterians.

No charge of immorality, however, is laid against the inspired; nor does it appear that they could have any interested motives; nothing contrary to Scripture strikes us in reading their books (though certainly it required no deity to frame such oracles); no detection of imposture followed upon their failure in raising the dead; nor did the former appearances of inspiration cease; but the chief of the prophets went to Holland and Germany; and Cavalier is said to have died governor of Jersey. The whole affair, therefore, seems to be of that ambiguous complexion, which entitles it to be thrown, according to the sagely facetious advice of Cotton Mather, into the heap of unaccountables.

About this time, fifty new parish churches were by act of parliament, erected in London; and on her birth-day queen Ann sent a message to the house of commons, declaring her intention to devote that branch of the revenue, about seventeen thousand pounds per annum, which was raised out of the first fruits and tenths of the clergy, to the increase of all



the small benefices in the kingdom. This augmentation is now called Queen Ann's Bounty. But the establishment received more solid advantages from the talents and character of some who were, at this time, exalted to the episcopal bench. Dr. Watson, bishop of St. David's, who was supposed to have bought his see, was convicted of attempting to reimburse himself by selling the benefices in his gift; and as he was deprived for the simony, the queen promoted to the vacant throne the celebrated Dr. Bull, whose able treatise on the doctrine of the primitive church concerning the Trinity, gained him the applause of all the learned. Even the general assembly of the clergy of France desired the bishop of Meaux to return him thanks for the service he had done their common faith. It will, however, to some appear a suspicious honour, to be praised by the church of Rome, through the medium of the most insidious opposer of the protestant faith. Dr. Beveridge was, about the same time, promoted to the see of St. Asaph; and that of Lincoln was filled by Dr. Wake, a celebrated divine, who may again occupy our attention.

Dr. Hoadley, who was afterwards bishop of Bangor, being called to preach before the lord mayor of London, chose for his text the words of the apostle Paul, "let every soul be subject to the higher powers." He explained the passage as applicable only to good governors; asserted that it was not only lawful, but a duty, to resist tyrants; and delivered a vindication of the revolution and the present government. This roused the high church party to rage, and Hoadley complained that fury was let loose upon him. The waves, which had been long swelling, now tore

away every opposing mound, and Sacheverel, with his mobs, burst in upon the nation like a summer flood, loud, frothy, rapid, and destructive; but happily evanescent. Thus the first period of our history closes with a view of the country, mad after its idol Sacheverel, paying its devotions in bachanalian feasts, where confusion to dissenters was drunk to glorious excess; while the sober portion of our countrymen could only sigh in secret over the infatuation of the mass.

A summary view of the moral and religious state of England, at the end of queen Ann's reign, is given by bishop Burnet, who, as he was a cotemporary, and wrote in the prospect of his speedy appearance before the Searcher of hearts, leaving it to be read only when he should be out of the reach of human flattery or frowns, may be considered a judge, at once competent and impartial. The commonalty are pronounced most happy in their circumstances, but inconceivably ignorant of religion. The dissenters, says the bishop, have a much larger share of knowledge among them, than is among those who come to our churches. This is pronounced unaccountable, considering the plainness with which religion is taught, and the number of cheap little books dispersed over the nation; but these methods of religious instruction in the establishment failed for want of evangelical sentiments, inculcated in Scriptural language, with the bold cutting appeals to the heart and conscience, which prevailed among the puritans.

The men of trade and business were the best part of the nation; for while the lowest classes were brutified with ignorance, and those who attended to

agriculture cared for nothing else, the inhabitants of trading towns and cities, were not only generous and sober, but displayed knowledge, zeal, charity, and devotion. In London, though the pride of wealth, and love of splendid luxury much prevailed, yet among the citizens, with all their faults, was found the flower of the nation. In this class must be sought the great mass of the dissenters.

The gentry are pronounced the worst instructed, and the least knowing of their rank to be found in Europe. They were ill-taught, ill-bred, haughty, insolent, and ignorant of religion; for after they forgot their catechism, they acquired no new knowledge but from romances or plays. They soon found it a modish thing, which looks like wit and spirit, to laugh at religion and virtue, which rendered them crude and unpolished infidels. They could give no better reason why they hated and despised all who separated from the church, than the papists have for hating heretics. Instead of being taught at the universities to love their country and constitution, its laws and liberties, they were disposed to love arbitrary government: provocation or a change of interests might induce them to act for the public welfare, but as they had no principle, they were easily brought to like slavery, if they were but allowed to become the tools of the despot.

The nobility and gentry, grown tired of the semblance of religion, abandoned the practice of keeping a chaplain; and "I do not wonder at it, says the historian, when I reflect on the behaviour of too many of the chaplains, light and idle, vain and insolent, impertinent and pedantic. Indeed the clergy in general

are grossly defective in any proper zeal or earnestness in the work. I saw much zeal in the clergy of the church of Rome, though it is ill directed. I saw much throughout the foreign churches ; the dissenters have a great deal among them ; but I must own, that the main body of our clergy has always appeared to me dead and lifeless, and disposed only to lay one another asleep. Many of them had a strong bias towards popery, and a hatred for the reformation, which soured the minds of sound protestants. While they were the most remiss in their labours, and the least severe in their lives of any clergy in Europe, the people hold them so cheap, that without some amendment, no arguments, laws, or authority will be strong enough to preserve them from ruin and distress, for which they are ill prepared." The lewdness of the stage was unparalleled ; for while the French poets had reformed their drama, the English theatre was still the hot-bed of vice, where every incentive was provided to urge to maturity all the most depraved propensities of the heart. Here Dryden's muse descended from pure ethereal regions, and prostituted herself to a rude gentry, which mistook obscenity for wit, and impiety for genius. If the English stage has been, since, less offensive to decency, its reformation may be attributed to the severe castigations which these impurities drew from the non-juring Collier.

But as the triumph of the reformation obliged the catholic church to become more decent in its manner, and the failures of inquisitorial weapons compelled it to forge new arms, by cultivating those branches of learning which would render it respectable in the eyes of the world, and mighty in the field of controversy ; so the English establishment felt herself com-

pelled, by the toleration of dissenters, to rouse all her energies and employ all her talents to meet them in something like a fair competition. Never did she display so much of that kind of ability, which was calculated to allure the gentleman, the scholar, the philosopher, to embrace her altars from choice; as since it had become lawful for them to bow before those of her rivals. Nor were her efforts unsuccessful, for Tillotson and others of her sons, now turned the tide of popular applause in her favour; while the dissenters were left to the unenvied, though not unenviable honour of adhering to the humbling unadorned doctrines of the cross. For with much increase of honour from elegant writers and fashionable preachers, the establishment remained in all the darkness which succeeded the ejection of more than two thousand of her best divines; nor was there more than here and there a solitary star, whose faint twinkling just served to shew how large a part of the hemisphere was enveloped in the thickest clouds of night. Even those divines who are most applauded never brought forth the prominent doctrines of the Gospel in a way calculated to make men wise to salvation; and the meagre portion of evangelical truth, which their sermons contained, was delivered in eloquence, which played upon the mind like the reflection of the sun beams, from the surface of water in a polished vase; but to direct the truth into the heart and conscience, as from the focus of a burning lens, was dreaded and abhorred as the damning proof of a puritanic taint. Yet some sparks of vital religion were here and there visible. Those pious men, who, at the restoration, approving of the book of common prayer, continued in the establishment; the children

of deceased puritans who had never formed separate churches; the fruit of their ministry, which many nonconformists even advised to remain within the bosom of the national church, all contributed to preserve a latent heat. Thus the daughter of Dr. Annesley, a celebrated nonconformist, was married to Mr. Samuel Wesley, a high churchman, whose son, the famous John Wesley, praises her for exemplary piety, and records her zeal in gathering, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eleven, her neighbours to join in the family prayers, which she conducted, and where she read Frank's Account of Pietism at Halle, and the History of the Danish Missions on the Malabar Coast.<sup>b</sup>

In speaking of the eminent men which the establishment produced during this period, it must not be forgotten, that it was the age of great men rather than of good ones, of philosophers rather than of Christians. The military skill of Marlborough made him the god of the day, and fed a passion for war, which is deadly poison to the spirit of religion. The divines, with whom our history is principally concerned, present but a meagre list to the admiration of discerning Christians. First in rank and in estimation is archbishop Tillotson, who was educated and entered on his ministry among the dissenters; for it is a saying, that the fathers of the church never were her sons. He, however, had too much goodness and benevolence to verify the common remark, that apostates

<sup>b</sup> See Wesley's Life, p. 241. Was it because it was more honourable for this good woman to be the daughter of Dr. Annesley than the wife of Samuel Wesley, that her son John, who did nothing without a meaning, inserted on her tomb only, that "she was the youngest and last surviving daughter of Dr. Annesley?"

are the most furious opposers of those whom they desert. He is said to have introduced the custom of preaching by notes, which, indeed, his style and manner seemed to require. He was the most popular preacher in the establishment, and his works have been so much admired, that Whitfield had reason for saying, "I have written against England's two greatest favourites, the Whole Duty of Man, and archbishop Tillotson, who I said knew no more of religion than Mahomet." It is, indeed, true, that though he defends the outworks admirably, and with great good sense confounds infidels and papists; yet a man will not catch the distinguishing features, the essential spirit of the Gospel, from the works of Tillotson.

His pious father might well be grieved at his fall from the doctrines of grace, rather than pleased at his elevation to national honours. The courage and fidelity displayed in preaching his sermons on the duty of constancy in our religion, under the frown of the tyrant James, demands high praise; while it excites a sigh, that he knew no better the genius of that religion, to which it is a duty to adhere in spite of danger or of death. He seems to have acquired his popularity, by stripping theology of antique forms, and substituting the language of common sense; but when, from reading the writings of the most celebrated nonconformists, we come to consult him, who is so much vaunted above them, we are astonished at his feeble style, his illogical divisions, his meagre divinity, and, above all, his vast inferiority to some of the puritan divines in the charms of pulpit eloquence. Dr. Beveridge, bishop of St. Asaph, better deserved the high place which Tillotson held in the public esteem; but Beveridge's works breathe too much of

the humbling spirit of true religion to render him a favourite with those who pique themselves upon admiring his grace of Canterbury.

Stillingfleet, bishop of Worcester, has displayed more learning and genius than either of the preceding prelates, or than any on the bench. His *Origines Sacræ* contain all the stores of human erudition, poured out for the service of the sanctuary. His *Mischief of Separation* was answered by Dr. Owen, and the *Mischief of Imposition* shewn by other writers among the dissenters. He was engaged in a controversy with Mr. Locke, in which he is said to have been much inferior to his antagonist.

Of all the inferior clergy, none demand a more honourable mention than William Burkitt, author of the popular commentary on the New Testament. He was ordained, when young, by bishop Reynolds, one of the presbyterian ministers who conformed at the restoration. After preaching one and twenty years at Malden, in Suffolk, he was instituted to the vicarage of Dedham, in Essex, where he died in October, in the year one thousand seven hundred and three. He was eminently devoted to the best interests of mankind, to which he annually consecrated considerable sums. He made great collections for the French protestants, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-seven, and by his care, pains, and charges, he procured a minister to be settled in Carolina. His exposition of the New Testament, which, like many other middling or indifferent performances, has slipped into considerable popularity, is thus characterised by the candid and judicious Doddridge. "He has but few valuable criticisms, but



many schemes of old sermons. His sentiments vary in different parts of the work, according as the authors from whence he took his materials, were orthodox or not.\* Thus a book, which is a mere compilation of error and truth, is the oracle with that class of readers who are least able to sift the chaff from the wheat.

Of the laymen, whom death called out of the communion of the established church during this period, none deserves more honourable notice in a history of religion, than sir Robert Boyle. He was the seventh son and the fourteenth child of Richard, earl of Cork, and was born at Lismore, in Ireland, January the twenty-fifth, in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-six. His mind was so susceptible of impressions from the objects of his studies, that he says, the reading of *Amadis de Gaul*, and other romantic books, produced such a restlessness in him, that he was obliged to apply himself to the extraction of the square and cube roots, and to the laborious operations of algebra, in order to fix and settle the volatile operations of his fancy. As he early devoted himself to theological studies, and adorned his knowledge by his practice, he was earnestly solicited to enter into holy orders, that he might occupy the episcopal bench; but reflecting that whatever he wrote as a layman would be more effectual in the service of religion, than any thing which can be said by the clergy, whom the infidels represent as hired defenders of Christianity, he declined the clerical honour. His chief attentions were, indeed, directed to philosophical pursuits, in which he so far excelled as to be placed next to lord

\* *Doddridge's Preaching Lectures.*

**Bacon.** He was one of the first members of the royal society, and Dr. Herman Boerhaave says, "to him we owe the secrets of fire, air, water, animals, vegetables, and fossils, so that from his works may be deduced the whole system of natural knowledge. Amidst these labours, however, he often wrote excellently on the subject of religion, Some of his reflections being founded on trivial subjects, Dean Swift, who better loved to snarl at weakness than to imitate excellence, satyrised him in "A Pious Meditation on a Broomstick, in the style of the honourable Mr. Boyle."

After a life of bodily infirmity and mental exertion, he died on the last day of the year one thousand six hundred and ninety one, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. Bishop Burnet preached his funeral sermon on a very appropriate text. "For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge, and joy." He says, that from the many happy hours he had spent in conversation with him during the course of twenty-nine years, he could speak of his sincere and unaffected piety, and especially of his zeal for the Christian religion, without any narrow, bigotted notion of it as if confined to a particular sect. Sir Robert Boyle founded a course of lectures which is called by his name, and has given rise to many admirable sermons in defence of Christianity. He defrayed the expence of translating and printing the New Testament in the Malay tongue. He nobly recompensed the translator of Grotius on the truth of the Christian religion into Arabic. He gave seven hundred pounds towards an edition of the Irish Bible, a liberal sum towards the Welch translation of the Scriptures; three hundred pounds towards the propa-

gation of the Gospel in America, and one hundred to diffuse the knowledge of Christ in the east. Indeed the prelate observes, that to his own knowledge, sir Robert distributed, in various charities, upwards of a thousand pounds per annum.

Robert Nelson, esq. having devoted himself to the service of that mode of religion which he approved, may demand a place in this work though its authors cannot view his religion without regret. He was born in London, in the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-six, and educated at Trinity college, Cambridge. He was admitted a member of the royal society, in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty, and having travelled on the continent of Europe, he married a lady who proved to be a papist. At the revolution, he became a non-juror; for archbishop Tillotson, who died in his arms, told him, that it was a detestable trick to join in prayers where there was any thing judged to be sinful. After writing his book on the feasts and fasts, and bequeathing his whole estate to religious and charitable uses, he died in the year one thousand seven hundred and fourteen.

## SECTION II.

## STATE OF RELIGION IN SCOTLAND.

THE near alliance which has subsisted between the church of Scotland and the English dissenters, entitles our northern neighbours to a considerable share of our attention. It is highly probable that the persecution of Diocletian drove Christianity from England to take refuge across the Tweed; for though king Donald and his queen are said to have embraced the religion of Jesus in the commencement of the third century, it was not till seventy years after that Cratiliath substituted the Christian for the pagan institutions as the religion of the kingdom. Six centuries more elapsed, before the bishops could boast any fixed dioceses. But Scotland at length became renowned for St. Columba and his school of missionaries, for Gale and Columbanus, who preached not only through their own country, but extended their labours to France and Swisserland, as Aidan and Finan did to England. In the twelfth century king David earned the title of saint, by filling his kingdom with abbies and bishoprics, which he endowed with almost the whole of his extensive crown lands<sup>4</sup>.

Scotland enjoyed the earliest beams of the reformation; for in the year one thousand four hundred and seven James Retby was burned for adopting its principles, and those who were called Waldenses were, soon after, cited in great numbers before the

<sup>4</sup> Robertson's History of Scotland, vol. I. p. 141.

ecclesiastical tribunals. But Patrick Hamilton, abbot of Fern, was the most distinguished martyr; for, having travelled into Germany, he derived from the conversation of Luther, Melancthon, and Lambert, such a spirit, that his brethren seized him soon after his return, and committed him to the flames. Such, however, were the effects of his death, that when the persecutors were debating where they should burn Henry Forest, who was condemned for saying Patrick Hamilton was a good man, and a martyr, a shrewd man exclaimed, "burn them in future in an underground cellar, for the smoke of Hamilton has infected with his sentiments all on whom it blew." George Wisheart, a man of apostolic simplicity, courage, and zeal, having preached, first in a private house at Montrose, and afterwards in the fields, was seized by cardinal Beatoun, the dissolute archbishop of St. Andrews, who, from his castle window, feasted his eyes with the dying agonies of the good man whom he committed to the fire. Wisheart warned the cardinal that his triumph would be short, which prediction has been supposed to have produced its own fulfillment; for, shortly after, the two Leslies, James Melville, and some others, who, says Buchanan, had a private quarrel with Beatoun, having gained possession of the castle, killed the cardinal, and shewed his bloody corpse to the populace, from the very window out of which he had beheld the burning of the martyr. One of the conspirators declared that no private passions, but a desire to avenge the death of Wisheart stimulated him to the deed, of which, however, says Petrie, we may judge by the event, for all the conspirators died miserably.

The minority of Mary queen of Scots, and her

residence in France, afforded the reformers time and opportunities to diffuse their sentiments. To the piety, zeal, and spirit of martyrdom, which were the chief qualifications of the pioneers of the Scotch reformation, others soon added the advantage of distinguished learning and more enlarged views. The celebrated Buchanan employed his elegant and satirical pen against the monks, and John Knox arose with his favourite system to substitute for the hierarchy of Rome, which he was determined to overturn. Edward the sixth, while he was perfecting the reformation in England, gave fresh vigour to the Scotch reformers, and even when that excellent prince was succeeded by his popish sister, her disgusting cruelties only swelled their ranks with numbers who fled from the fires of persecution. Though the first converts to the new doctrines were chiefly from the inferior classes of society, they were now encouraged and fortified by the accession of many nobles, who sent delegates through the kingdom to invite all ranks to subscribe an association, and openly to maintain the truth. From their frequent meetings, both for counsel and for worship, the protestants were called the congregation; and, in the year one thousand five hundred and fifty-seven, they entered into a solemn covenant to promote the reformation, which was subscribed by the earls of Argyle, Glencairne, and Morton, lord Lorn, John Erskine of Dun, and other distinguished men.

But, alarmed by the rapid increase of the protestants, who now filled all the low countries, and formed one half of the kingdom, the queen dowager, having rendered herself regent, rekindled the flames of persecution, to which she doomed Walter Mill,

an aged priest who had lately deserted the catholic church. This, however, kindled other fires, which the clergy would gladly have extinguished; for the reformed were now roused to defend their lives as well as diffuse their principles. The queen regent was, therefore, compelled to dissemble, and consented that they should enjoy their public worship in their own language, provided it were not introduced into Edinburgh or Leith. When she failed in her engagements to them, they sent the earl of Glencairne and sir Hugh Campbell to remonstrate with her; to whom she not only avowed her determination to root out the protestant heresy, but plainly told them the promises of princes ought not to be too carefully remembered, ~~nor~~ the performance of them exacted unless it suits their own convenience\*.

The two parties broke out into open war, in which the French forces of the queen regent would have crushed the protestants, had they not have been aided by Elizabeth of England. The queen regent, now arrested by the messenger of death, sent for Willock, one of the most eminent of the reformed preachers, to whom she listened with reverence, declaring that she expected salvation only through the blood of Christ. A treaty between the contending powers was concluded in the year one thousand five hundred and sixty, in which the lords of the congregation obtained indemnity for all that was past, and permission to determine in a parliament, which was immediately to be held, the future religion of the kingdom. After a day of thanksgiving for the happy termination of the contest, the reformers sent twelve of their principal preachers, into those parts of the kingdom

\* Robertson, vol. I. p. 174.

where they judged the interests of the reformation would be most effectually promoted by their labours<sup>f</sup>. The friends of the new system then presented to the parliament a petition, which, in a style of great severity denounced the doctrines and hierarchy of Rome, praying that the church might be reformed, and its revenues appropriated to the support of the protestant ministers, and the relief of the poor. The parliament not only accepted their petition, but appointed several ministers to draw up a confession of faith, which, when they presented, though it was drawn up on purpose to expose the absurdities of Rome, the senate passed without the least alteration. The prelates in the assembly beheld all these tremendous strides with mysterious silence, at which their enemies triumphed, the earl marshal observing, that the protestant petition must certainly contain the very truth of God. The authority of the pope, and of the ecclesiastical court was abolished, and the mass, or the exercise of religious worship according to the rites of the church of Rome, was prohibited, under pain of forfeiture of goods or corporal punishment for the first offence, banishment for the second, and death by hanging for the third. Thus, as soon as it was in their power, they imitated the infamous conduct of which they had with so much justice and vehemence complained, blasting the credit of all their former labours, and meriting the persecutions which soon fell upon their own heads.

The reformed divines now proceeded to compose the book of discipline, which was to be the constitution of the new establishment. In very few points it differed from that of Geneva, so that the clergy

<sup>f</sup> Brown's History, vol. II. p. 27.



began immediately to meet in presbyterian courts, though the discipline was not yet ratified by the parliament. But popular violence accelerated the labours of the clergy and parliament; for after Knox had preached a sermon against idolatry, at Perth, while several persons remained in the church, a priest, willing, perhaps, to prove that Dagon had not fallen, opened a box of sacred utensils, which stood by the high altar, and began to prepare for the celebration of mass. At this, some, who felt more reverence for what they heard from Knox, than for what they saw at the altar, were roused to attack the images and crucifixes, which led to the general destruction of images and monasteries through all Fife<sup>z</sup>. Even when the rage of the populace had spent itself, the parliament shewed its zeal for the new book of discipline, by passing a solemn act for destroying, according to its requisition, every vestige of idolatry in the land. Abbeys, cathedrals, churches, libraries, and even the sepulchres of the dead, are said to have experienced the fury of this authorised destruction, though the preachers and leaders of the protestants condemned the conduct of their friends.

After the death of her husband, and an absence of thirteen years, Mary queen of Scots returned to her native country, where she found herself surrounded by subjects, who scrupled not to avow to her face, their abhorrence of her religion; and with difficulty permitted her to exercise, in private, the rites on which she supposed her salvation to depend; declaring, that a single mass was more dangerous to the kingdom, than an invasion of ten thousand men. The treatment which this beautiful sensualist received

<sup>z</sup> Petrie, p. 196.

from the reformers, was calculated only to increase her prejudices against their religion<sup>b</sup>; for while she refused to allow them a better maintenance, or to sanction the reformation by acts of parliament, their followers raised a riot to prevent the celebration of mass at her palace of Holyrood-house. Knox having written letters to exhort his friends to appear in behalf of two of the rioters, was himself accused and tried for treason. By a jury of protestants he was unanimously acquitted; but in a subsequent meeting of the general assembly he was publicly accused by Maitland of teaching seditious doctrine, concerning the right of subjects to resist those sovereigns who violate their duty. This doctrine, which Robertson pronounces so just in its own nature, but so delicate

<sup>b</sup> Heylin relates, with malignant triumph, that after Mary had been dancing at a ball till after midnight, Knox took for his text Psalm ii. "be wise, therefore, O, ye kings, &c." The preacher inveighed heavily against the vanity of princes, and their opposition to those who loved virtue and hated vice. The queen complained of it to Knox, who told her, that as the wicked will not come where they may be instructed and convinced of their faults, the providence of the righteous Governor of the world has so ordered it, that they shall hear of both their sins and reproofs, by scandalous reports. To which he added, that there was no doubt but Herod was told, that Christ had called him a fox; but he was not told of the sin which he committed in cutting off John the Baptist's head, to recompence the dancing of a harlot's daughter. When the ladies of the court appeared in all the elegance of dress, which Mary brought with her from France, Knox told them, it was all very pleasant, if it would always last, and they could go to heaven in all that gear. But fie on that knave death, said he, which will come whether we will or not, and when he hath laid an arrest, then foul worms will be busy with that flesh, be it never so fair and tender; and the silly soul, I fear, will be so feeble, that it can neither carry away with it, gold, garnishing, furbishing, pearls, nor precious stones.—Heylin's Hist. Presb. p. 176.

in its application, produced a debate, which displayed all the subtlety of Maitland, and all the heroism of Knox.

While Mary was planning the restoration of the catholic church, she was delivered, on the nineteenth of June, in the year one thousand five hundred and fifty-six, of a son, who was baptized by the priests of that communion, but educated by the presbyterians. His early improvements in that kind of knowledge, of which he afterwards made so ostentatious a display, induced the Scots to wrest him from the hands of Morton, the regent, and to invest him with the supreme authority at twelve years of age. But he soon proved himself the dupe of every debauchee who could produce the irresistible charms of a handsome person, fine clothes, and a graceful step. Those who had seized the estates of the bishops, to prevent them from reverting either to the king or the presbyterian clergy, contrived to perpetuate the name and semblance of the office. A convention of the principal ministers, and the committee of the privy council agreed that the name and office of archbishop and bishop should be continued during the king's minority, and these dignities be conferred on the best qualified among the protestant ministers, who should still, as to their spiritual jurisdiction, be subject to the general assembly, which consented to the regulation as a temporary expedient<sup>1</sup>.

After tacitly yielding to what he could neither approve nor prevent, Knox sunk under the weight of his cares and labours, November the twenty-seventh, in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-two, in the sixty-seventh year of his age. His last

<sup>1</sup> Robertson, vol. II. p. 39 and 86.

breath, with all his accustomed greatness of soul and confidence in the goodness of his cause, declared, "though I have been accused of excessive severity, I never hated the persons of any, but only their sins; which faithfulness to my ministry induced me to oppose." Expressing a confidence that he should speedily change his mortal life for a happy immortality, he breathed out his soul with the language of Stephen, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." The earl of Morton, who had felt the force of his reproofs, and who received his dying charge to be faithful to the king and the church of God, pronounced over him this eulogium, "here lies he who never feared the face of man<sup>k</sup>."

But the discernment of Beza, who had warned Knox not to suffer the temporary re-establishment of prelacy, began now to appear; for, after that the king had approved of the new system of ecclesiastical polity, which was prepared with great care and labour, his dissolute favourites, who dreaded its operation, persuaded him not to give it the force of law. This led the other party to renew its attacks upon the office of bishop. The nobles were jealous of the prelates as upstart peers, the patriots hated them as minions of the crown, the ministers spurned at them as lords over their brethren, and the people viewed their profane manners with religious horror. Several times, therefore, their power was abridged; and at last an act was passed in the general assembly, declaring the office of bishop, as it was then exercised, to have no warrant in the Word of God, and requiring all who then held it to resign, under pain of excommunication. Instead of giving its sanction to this decree, the court appointed to the archbishoprick

<sup>k</sup> Robertson, vol. II. p. 39 and 86.

of Glasgow, Montgomery, a man calculated only to increase the detestation in which his office was held. The spiritual powers, though threatened by the king's officers, excommunicated him; but, he, after seeming to cast himself upon the mercy of the kirk, proceeded with a company of gentlemen to Glasgow, where entering the church, he pushed aside the preacher, and took possession of the pulpit.

When James had escaped from what was called the Raid of Ruthven, which the ministers too publicly approved, he took his revenge by banishing several of them, and enacting, in the parliament of the year one thousand five hundred and eighty-four, such laws as were considered destructive to the constitution and discipline of the church. The kingdom was filled with alarm and complaints; all the ministers of Edinburgh fled to England, and were followed by the most eminent preachers from every other district; so that the people were left to bewail the loss of pastors whom they loved, and the subversion of a church which they idolised. But after that the favourite, Arran, who advised these measures, had rendered himself universally odious, the lords whom James had banished, with the assistance of the queen of England, compelled him to restore them to power. The ministers being now returned, and the most solemn assurances given that the presbyterian church should be reinstated in its former honours, the synod of Fife proceeded against Patrick Adamson, who, to the great grief of Heylin<sup>1</sup>, was compelled to renounce all authority over his brethren, and to become such a bishop as Paul describes.

After the king had made a romantic expedition for

<sup>1</sup> History of Presbyterians, p. 267.

a wife, and Mr. Robert Bruce, a presbyterian minister, had crowned her, the kirk won so much upon James's affections that, in the assembly of the year one thousand five hundred and ninety, he pronounced the highest encomiums upon her, and permitted the assembly to pass such acts as would gradually ensure the complete triumph of presbyterianism upon the ruins of episcopacy. But this gleam of royal sunshine was soon followed with a storm. The favour which the king shewed to papists, so shocked the prejudices of the times, that the most disrespectful things were said of him; and when he refused to comply with a petition which the popular party presented to him, the multitude was so enraged, that some called for arms, others cried bring out the wicked Haman. The sword of the Lord and of Gideon was the watch-word, which soon alarmed the king, who was holding the court of session at the Tolbooth. James escaped, however, unhurt, and soon improved the opportunity which it afforded, to curtail the power of the kirk, and to introduce the prelacy, for which he had conceived a strong predilection. But though he employed in this scheme all his kingcraft, he could not conceal the mine which was digged to destroy the presbyterian establishment. One of the ministers, in a general assembly, finely expressed the sentiments of the rest. "Varnish over this scheme with what colours you please, deck the intruder with the utmost art, under all this disguise I see the horns of his mitre<sup>m</sup>."

<sup>m</sup> Petrie gives it in the Scottish dialect thus, "Busk him als bonily as ye can, we see him well enow; see how he sets up the horns of his mitre." Church Hist. p. 543.

James took the earliest opportunity to employ the increase of power which he acquired by his accession to the throne of England, to subvert the presbyterian church of Scotland. In the parliament which met at Perth, in the year one thousand six hundred and six, he obtained the repeal of the act which annexed the church lands to the crown, and then restored the bishops, not only to their office and estates, but to the rank of lords of parliament. As, however, the courtly presbyters who received the new dignities, were in want of episcopal consecration, they were obliged to travel to London for it; where the bishops of London, Rochester, Ely, Bath, and Wells imparted what apostolic powers they possessed to Mr. Spotswood, who was made archbishop of Glasgow, Mr. Lamb bishop of Brechin, and Mr. Hamilton of Galloway. It was enacted, that a form of prayer should be drawn up; and the king was authorised to appoint the habits in which divine service should be performed. Some holy days were appointed; the sacrament of the Lord's-supper was to be received kneeling, and given to the sick; and confirmation, with the use of the sign of the cross in baptism were enjoined.

Bishop Burnet asserts, that the irreligion and hypocrisy of James created the mutual jealousies between him and the Scots, which generated his hatred for their religion. Speaking like one who well knew what gives weight to episcopacy, he also observes, "though the king created bishops, he could not give them episcopal estates and revenues; and as they ill performed their part, grew haughty, neglected their functions, were much at court, except a few, who, though stricter, leaned grossly

to popery, they soon sunk into profound contempt."

Charles, pursuing the same imprudent scheme as his father had set on foot, nominated a semi-papist to the newly-created see of Edinburgh. After Laud had travelled to Scotland, to crown the king and disgust his subjects, a book of canons was published, suited only to the meridian of Rome. In obedience to the royal command, the new liturgy was appointed to be read in all the churches of Edinburgh, on the twenty-third of July, in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-seven. At the great church were assembled archbishops and bishops, together with the lords of session, and the magistrates of Edinburgh. But when the dean began to read, the multitudes who were at the lower end of the church shouted, clapped their hands, and raised such a hideous noise that the bishop of Edinburgh ascended the pulpit to appease the people. Instead of hearkening to him they threw a stool at him<sup>n</sup>; on which the magistrates interfered, and succeeded in clearing the church of the rioters. The service was then finished, amidst the shouts and insults of the multitude without, who no sooner saw the members of the new hierarchy leave the church, than they shouted, "a pope, a pope, down with antichrist," and followed the bishops with such fury, that their lives were in danger. The riot was repeated in the evening; and in other churches the new liturgy met with the same reception; so that Edinburgh presented a scene of dreadful confusion. As Charles raised an army to compel his Scottish subjects to submit to the new religion, they associated in support of the old. King

<sup>n</sup> Archy, the king's fool, said it was the stool of repentance.



James had, in the year one thousand five hundred and eighty, subscribed a covenant, or sacred engagement to promote reformation and true religion, which was also subscribed by the whole nation ten years after. To this the nation now resorted again, as possessing the double advantage of a civil and sacred bond; to which they added a renunciation of popery and the late innovations, and a bond of defence, or an engagement to adhere to each other in support of the cause against every danger. It was devoutly subscribed and confirmed, first at Edinburgh, in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-seven, and afterwards through the whole kingdom.

The insincerity of the king, notwithstanding his apparent compliance with their wishes, afterwards induced the Scotch to levy an army in aid of that which the English parliament had embodied against the king. They found no such difficulties in raising men, or money, as had impeded the operations of Charles. Every fourth man was ready to take arms: those who had money lent it on the national credit; and others gave their plate to be coined. The women provided yarn and cloth for the use of the troops. Every regiment had a minister with it. The most solemn appearance of devotion prevailed through the army°. At first they had determined not to enter England, but on learning how much the English parliament needed their aid, they crossed the Tyne; and, engaging in the civil wars, contributed to set up presbytery in England. But when they seemed to have secured their object, the independents rose and snatched it from their hands. Cromwell having beaten the Scotch, compelled them to submit to what

• Brown, vol. II. p. 185.

they execrated as the great abomination, a toleration for those who differed from them. After having in vain remonstrated against this breach of their intolerant covenant, they united with the English to restore the king, who amused them with fair and liberal promises of adhering to the engagements which he had solemnly taken. Scarcely, however, had he returned, when he joined with the bishops, to convince the Scots, that the treatment which they had received from Cromwell and the independents, was not so hard as they had imagined.

It was determined to re-establish episcopacy in Scotland, and men were chosen for bishops, whom Burnet holds up to everlasting infamy. By hypocrisy, lies, and horrible perjury, Sharp, the first apostate from presbytery, succeeded in betraying the liberties of the kirk, and seating himself in the archiepiscopal see of St. Andrews. The rest of the bench were worthy of their leader; but the name of Leighton seems to have been placed on their list to complete their infamy, by shewing, in his example, all that they ought to have been, but were not. This apostolic bishop was shocked at the feasting and jollity which attended their consecration in Westminster abbey, and soon lost all confidence in the cause, saying, "there were such evident marks of an angry providence that they seemed, instead of building up the church, to be fighting against God." In the journey to Scotland, he grew heartily weary of his brother bishops, who were equally sick of his puritanic piety. As they designed to enter Edinburgh in state, he went before in a humble style, and while they gloried in their lordly titles and civil power, he refused to be called lord, and would never sit in parliament but

when some question which concerned the church was discussed.

The earl of Middleton and the other secular lords, who managed this ecclesiastical revolution, were notoriously impious and vicious; and the lords of council were perpetually drunk, so that amidst the fumes of liquor and of guilty passions, they governed both church and state. An act was passed requiring all the ministers to receive a presentation to their livings from the lay patrons, and institution from the bishops. As the livings of those who refused were to be declared vacant at the following Michaelmas, two hundred churches were shut up in one day. Above a hundred and fifty more of the ministers were turned out of the church for not submitting to the bishop's authority in the synods. In the west of the kingdom, the presbyterian ministers had resigned so many comfortable livings, that a general invitation being thrown out to all who would accept them, multitudes of the most ignorant and worthless wretches were made pastors of the churches. But as an act was passed against conventicles, the people were treated with the utmost severity for abandoning the ministrations of men whose characters they despised and abhorred<sup>p</sup>. The pious and benevolent heart of Leighton was so deeply wounded by these proceedings, that he went up to London, and assured the king he could not consent to establish the Christian religion itself, much less a particular form of church government, by such methods. As he considered himself accessory to the crimes by holding the office of a bishop, he begged permission to retire. Burnet was also roused to draw up a remonstrance

<sup>p</sup> Burnet, vol. I. p. 211—213.

against their conduct, by which he exposed himself to the vengeance of the prelates<sup>1</sup>. But the king so far approved of his representations as to pour forth the loudest reproaches against the vices of the episcopal corps. The same respectable writer declares, that the duchess of Hamilton, who was thought to be a zealous presbyterian, assured him that she never entered into the controversy, but adopted that as the best cause which she saw espoused by the best men and persecuted by the worst.

Sharp, who crept into the see of St. Andrews like a fox, ruled like a lion, and was hated like a dog; so that while he was riding in a coach in the streets of Edinburgh with the bishop of Orkney, he was shot at in open day, but his companion only was wounded<sup>2</sup>. This so far tamed him as to draw from his lips the only religious expression which Burnet ever heard him utter, and to induce him in future to favour more moderate counsels. After that the ministers, who were turned out of the churches, had preached in conventicles and in fields to great multitudes, several of them were, by royal indulgence, allowed to fill the vacant pulpits, while many consultations were held, with the professed design of healing the wounds of the church. The worthless Burnet, not he who was afterwards bishop of Sarum, was driven from the see of Glasgow, to introduce the conciliating Leighton; but as he answered all the loud complaints of desertion, which the episcopal clergy perpetually brought before him, by proposing no other remedy than patience, prayer, and better conduct, they judged themselves betrayed by their new diocesan. Some of the most popular episcopalians were sent through

<sup>1</sup> Burnet, vol. I. p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, p. 276.

the west of Scotland, to preach the people back to their parish churches again. But when all these methods failed of reconciling the nation, the government resorted to new severities, and attempted to dragoon the Scots into the episcopal church. Such cruelties were exercised, in various forms, as would furnish tales of woe sufficient to harrow up the soul of an inquisitor, and as oppression makes a wise man mad, it produced dreadful re-action by creating what may be called the sect of the cameronians. These were the strictest of the presbyterians, who not only refused to accept Charles's indulgence, because it implied the acknowledgement of his supremacy over the church, but also renounced his authority, declaring that he had, by violating the fundamental constitution, forfeited the crown. They were, of course, considered as outlaws; and as they held their meetings in the fields, where Richard Cameron was their principal preacher, they received from him their name. They frequently fought in defence of their principles with great courage, and sometimes with such success as to exasperate and alarm the government. When Cameron himself was killed in an engagement with the king's troops, they called over James Renwick from Holland to be their minister; for they judged it unlawful to hold communion with those presbyterians in Scotland who had yielded to the government of Charles over the church. Thus was Scotland kept bleeding at every pore till the revolution.

When the prince of Orange had compelled James to abdicate the throne, he summoned by letter a convention of the estates of Scotland to meet at Edinburgh, the fourteenth of March, in the year one thou-

sand six hundred and eighty-nine To this assembly, the Cameronian bands were an important guard ; for the king's troops being withdrawn, and the revolution suiting their views, who had long regarded the Stewarts as having forfeited their right to the crown, they kept the tories in check, and animated the presbyterian whigs. The commencement of the session, however, was rather ominous, for the bishop of Edinburgh, a zealous adherent of the dethroned monarch, was chosen chaplain, and openly prayed that God would have compassion on king James, and restore him. But the real sentiments of the convention were put to a more decisive test, when the duke of Hamilton, whom the low party nominated as president, was chosen by a majority of forty voices ; on which twenty professed tories, seeing how things were likely to terminate, took care to go over in time, and join the opposite ranks.

The convention, with the exception of only five dissentient voices, voted that king James had forfeited his right to the crown, and that the throne was vacant, which they then gave to William and Mary. In his first letter, king William had proposed an union of the two kingdoms ; but the majority of the convention, who were presbyterians, wisely avoided this, concluding, that in an united parliament, it would be impossible to carry the abolition of episcopacy, which they were determined to accomplish. The king, however, superior to bigotry, wished only for the establishment of that church which would best accord with the wishes of his subjects. As episcopacy was at present established in Scotland, and was predominant in England, he was not eager to abolish it ; but the bishops, who had been very courageous in persecuting a de-

fenceless people, were now so terrified, that they vanished from notice, and William scarcely seeing or hearing any thing of them for some time, wondered what was become of the party. When they sent up the dean of Glasgow to the king, he promised, that if they would concur in the new settlement of the kingdom, he would do what he could for their preservation; but he insisted on a toleration for the presbyterians, and frankly told them, if a great majority of the parliament should declare for presbytery, he would not make war for them. William, however, found that the bishops were so obstinately devoted to the exiled family of the Stewarts, that it was necessary to crush episcopacy, in order to establish his throne.

In the instrument of government, and statement of grievances, which the commissioners from the convention presented to the king, it was declared, that "prelacy, and the superiority of any office above presbyters, is and has been a great and insupportable burden to this nation, and contrary to the inclinations of the generality of the people, ever since the reformation; they having reformed popery by presbytery, and that prelacy ought to be abolished." However, therefore, it might offend the church of England, it was evidently necessary to give up the Scotch episcopal church. After repealing the act of supremacy, of the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-nine, by which the king seemed to have been empowered, to establish almost whatever religion he pleased, an act was passed for abolishing episcopacy, and the pre-eminence of any orders in the church above that of presbyters. It declared, that the king and queen, with the advice and consent of parlia-

ment, would settle by law, that church which was most agreeable to the inclinations of the people.

The power which the presbyterians had now regained; they employed against the episcopalians, as far as the wise, tolerant government of William would allow, and when he checked their bigotry, they complained aloud. Sir James Montgomery, a discontented whig, observed, that "some were for a certain kind of presbytery, called erastianism, like that of Holland; but no other ought to be established in Scotland, than the model of the year one thousand six hundred and forty-eight, which was the government most conformable to the Word of God, and best able to controul the extravagant power of kings, under which they had groaned so many years." The general assembly, which met in the autumn of the year one thousand six hundred and ninety, proceeded in such a spirit that it was judged necessary to dissolve them; against which Mr. Creighton, their moderator, remonstrated, in their name, declaring, "that the office-bearers in the house of God have a spiritual intrinsic power from Jesus Christ, the only Head of the church, to meet in assembly about the affairs thereof; the necessity of the same being represented to the magistrate." Thus, while the high-church party was spreading disaffection to William, as if he designed to sacrifice the church of England to the dissenters, the presbyterians in Scotland were murmuring, because he would not espouse their cause, with the same narrow impolitic partiality as the Stewarts had shewn to the episcopalians. These opposite complaints, however, form the highest eulogium on the wise and dignified moderation of the king.



Some of the ministers in the general assembly, not content with asserting presbyterian government to be the only discipline established in Scotland, wished for a legislative declaration, that it was the only government authorised by Christ. When the parliament appointed a new oath to be taken to William, with a declaration that he was king, not only by possession, but by right, before any minister could hold a living, or vote in the church courts ; many refused to comply, lest they should seem to acknowledge the king's right to interfere in the government of the church. The massacre of Glencoe, which has been deemed the greatest blot in William's government, had soured the minds of the people ; and the king, seeing the intolerant violence of the presbyterians, seemed to veer round towards the favourers of episcopacy. These various causes created such jealousies and dissensions through the kingdom, that it seemed almost on the eve of a civil war.

At length, however, the presbyterians began to see their error, and relaxing in their mode of governing the church, admitted those who had formerly complied with episcopacy, to return to the establishment, acknowledging only that presbytery was the legal government of that church. And now the court, in its turn, smiled upon the presbyterian kirk. The parliament enacted several laws for confirming the Westminster confession of faith, and directory of discipline and worship ; for restraining blasphemy, profaneness, and the increase of popery ; for the establishment of schools, and the encouragement of preachers, especially in the northern parts of the kingdom. In order to prevent the profanation of the Sabbath, they passed a very excellent act, to prohibit

all markets on Saturdays or Mondays. The general assembly, also, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-four, issued a decree which has tended to render the Scotch church eminent for the exposition of the sacred writings. Every minister was charged to expound or lecture, as they term it, on a considerable portion of the Old or New Testament. The strictest regulations were formed for the conduct of the clergy, and the supply of the various parishes with suitable ministers. Those who understood only the Erse, or Gaelic tongue, were provided with the psalms and catechisms in that language; and no preacher, who was acquainted with it, was allowed to settle in the lowlands. Forty-four ministers were deputed to travel and preach in the north; and wherever there were more than a certain number of preachers in a district, several of them were to go on a mission to those parts of the kingdom, where the means of instruction were most deficient. The strictest regulations were adopted for the education and conduct of students in divinity, and for the worship of God in private families. As, however, many serious people, the remains of the Cameronian party, still refused to join the re-established church, on account of her defects in discipline, and some other things, which they considered contrary to presbyterian probity, the assembly published "a Seasonable Admonition," in which they plainly asserted, that Christ was the sole Head of the church, which had an intrinsic right of government, and attempted to prove, to all who were dissatisfied, that the church of Scotland was now in such a state of purity and perfection, that men might not only lawfully

\* Brown, vol. II.

join, but could not, without sin, desert her communion.

Their boasted purity was, however, vilely tarnished with the guilt of persecution; for their conduct proved, that if there were those in England, who thought the world was made for bishops, there were not wanting in Scotland such as fancied it was created for presbyterians. Papists and quakers were thought a fair mark for the arrows of these persecutors; who they were perpetually harrassing with inquisitorial decrees. All schoolmasters were obliged to subscribe to the Westminster confession of faith. The clergy attempted to prohibit protestants from marrying catholics, and to prevent those who were called scandalous persons, from turning papists, in order to escape the rigour of the presbyterian discipline. They proposed also to publish their sentences of excommunication through the presbytery in which the parties lived, and, in case of contumacy, through the whole kingdom\*. Thus, while they were making their religion so strict, as to rouse the most malignant abhorrence of such kind of persons as have ever composed the great body of a people; they, at the same time, so rigidly enforced it, as to prohibit men from embracing any other communion which they might prefer. Who would have thought that these men had so lately groaned under the cruelties of a similar intolerance? But, as by such conduct, they ceased to deserve even a toleration themselves, they soon began to tremble for their exclusive establishment.

On the death of William, and the accession of queen Ann, in the year one thousand seven hundred

\* Brown, vol. II. p. 335.

and two, the Scots were assured of her majesty's determination to maintain the presbyterian government in the church. But, aware of her high church prejudices, her northern subjects laboured to obtain better securities than her royal word, and succeeded in passing an act, by which it was declared high treason to alter the government of the presbyterian church<sup>u</sup>. King William, who was perpetually maligned for his supposed indifference or enmity to the church of England, had always magnanimously refused to bind presbytery on his successors, by rendering it treason to attempt any alteration; but this infamous act, which seemed to preclude even the fair methods of argument against the presbyterian church, was passed by the ministry of a queen who was ever at work to exalt episcopacy upon the ruins of dissent. It was owned, that by this act a declaration, that presbytery was wrong, and episcopacy should be restored, would be high treason: yet it passed. It was wisely said, save me from my friends, and I will defend myself against my enemies<sup>x</sup>.

The Scotch clergy were still, however, so much afraid of Ann's unwelcome interference in their affairs, that several of the provincial synods framed acts, which expressly declare, that Christ is sole head of the church, which has an intrinsic power, and is by divine appointment, to be governed solely by presbyters.

<sup>u</sup> Burnet, vol. II. p. 360.

<sup>x</sup> The parliament expelled Sir Alexander Bruce for affirming, that presbytery was inconsistent with monarchy; that, like vice and hypocrisy, and other pests of mankind, it spread and flourished most in turbulent times of anarchy and rebellion; and that order and decency in the church, were preferable to the pride and infallibility of a pope in every parish. Belsham, vol. II. p. 156.

But when some of the more zealous ministers attempted to push such an act through the general assembly, the earl of Seaforth, the queen's commissioner, took care to escape a measure so hostile to the views of his mistress by dissolving the assembly. This attack upon the independency of the presbyterian church, was loudly opposed, and many protestations were offered against the dissolution; but the moderator was so treated by the imperious commissioner, that he could only conclude the meeting by prayer. From this time a kind of compromise has been agreed upon, between what James the first would call kingcraft and priestcraft; for as the presbyterians claimed a right to meet in ecclesiastical courts, independent of any power but that of Christ, and the state refused to allow so dangerous a rival to assemble without any controul from the magistrate, they both adopted an expedient to save the honour of their respective claims; for the moderator first dissolved the assembly in the name of Christ, the only head of the church, and the commissioner afterwards dissolved it in the name of the sovereign.

But nothing gave the presbyterians so just cause of alarm, as the proposal for a legislative union of the two kingdoms. The Scots were afraid, that when they lost their own parliament, chosen by presbyterians, from among men who were themselves educated in that persuasion, and instead of it should be represented in an assembly, where episcopalians would have the majority, and bishops occupy bench in the upper house, their beloved form of ecclesiastical government would soon be overturned. Many, also, who cared little for presbytery, but were secret jacobites, fomented these alarms, in order to prevent the

union, which would diminish their hopes of restoring the Stewarts to the throne. Tremblingly alive to their danger, the lovers of the present kirk framed such acts as they thought the English government would not pass, even for the sake of carrying its darling object, the union. After a general vote in favour of the union had been passed, and before any of its particular articles were considered, an act was introduced for securing the presbyterian church government ; which declared it to be the only government in the church of Scotland, unalterable in all succeeding times, and the maintenance of it was declared to be a fundamental and essential condition of the union. This was to be made a part of the articles of the union ; so that it was to be ratified by another act of the parliament of England.

When the point was thus carried in Scotland, the queen laid the terms before the English parliament, which passed the whole without any opposition. Thus the very enemies of presbytery, by opposing the union, became the instruments of establishing the presbyterian church in Scotland, with all the security which human laws could give. A clause was also inserted, which enacted that no test or subscription should ever be imposed within the bounds of the Scotch church, contrary to their presbyterian establishment, though Scotchmen were left liable to such tests in every other part of the British empire.

As the presbyterians in the north had taken care to secure their church, the archbishop of Canterbury moved, in the English house of lords, that a bill be brought in for securing the church of England ; by which all acts passed in her favour, were declared to be in full force for ever. This also was made an

essential part of the union. But after that the scrupulous consciences in Scotland had protested, that it was against their principles and covenants to approve of the civil power of bishops, to twenty-six of whom the united kingdom would now be subject; it is not surprising that the commissioners of the Scotch church should present an address, "intreating that there might be no stipulation for the establishment of the English hierarchy and ceremonies, as they would not involve themselves and the nation in guilt." This was too unfair to be granted; so that by the solemn ratification of the act of union, each nation pledged itself to support the other's religion.

Here was a politico-ecclesiastical phenomenon: two powerful establishments, supported by laws and revenues, quaking for their existence; so that when presbyterianism was to be inserted in a deed solemn as magna charta, the clergy in the north dreaded that episcopacy should be secured in the south; where a counter alarm prevailed, lest forty-five presbyterians introduced into an assembly of upwards of five hundred episcopalians, should turn the scale against them and the whole weight of the royal crown and twenty-six lord bishops. The result of all these ludicrous fears and precautions was, that the two parties agreed to support bishops, and their ceremonies, in England; with presbyterianism, and all its hatred of the hierarchy, in Scotland; so that in all future ages it should be treason to attempt to introduce episcopacy in Scotland, or to overturn it in England.

These inconsistencies confirmed many of the most rigid presbyterians in their dislike of the Scotch church, which they considered as abandoned to erastianism; or the sin of accommodating the church and religion

to the will of the magistrate, and the circumstances of the times. The cameronians, who had voluntarily submitted to the government of king William, might now be considered as extinct; but their spirit survived, and some excellent men still viewed the government as guilty of opposing, what was called the sole headship of Christ, and the church of complying with such things as amounted to a virtual renunciation of true presbyterian principles. Two ministers of the names of Hepburn and M'Millan, are spoken of as men of eminent piety and zeal, who, on these accounts, deemed it unlawful to hold communion with the Scotch kirk.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and nine, was established "the society for promoting Christian knowledge in the highlands and islands, which were in the most deplorable darkness. Their local circumstances were unfavourable to mental improvement; for, shut up in scattered islands, or inaccessible mountains, separated by rapid rivers or arms of the sea, without bridges or high roads, they lived in detached hordes, or solitary cabins; while their language, which was of small extent, had few books, and many parishes of thirty or forty miles extent, had not a single school; so that the ignorant inhabitants were left a prey to popish emissaries. The feudal system, which yet subsisted there in all its force, held the inhabitants in chains, and rendered them liable to the arbitrary calls of their chieftain, whenever he should summon them from their houses. Impressed with such a scene, some gentlemen of Edinburgh, who had formed one of the societies for reformation of manners, resolved to devise some plan for the instruction of this neglected portion of their countrymen.



They at first resolved to establish charity schools in different places; but as their voluntary subscriptions were by no means equal to the objects, they presented a memorial to the general assembly, which recommended a contribution through the whole kingdom to accomplish the benevolent design. A committee being appointed by the assembly to confer with the members of the society, they agreed together to publish proposals for propagating Christian knowledge in the highlands and islands of Scotland, and in foreign parts. Copies of these proposals were circulated over the kingdom, with the list of subscriptions, which soon amounted to one thousand pounds; when queen Ann published her royal proclamation in favour of the society, and issued letters patent under the great seal of Scotland for erecting certain of the subscribers into a corporation. Thus was established a society, whose progress was in future years marked with benevolent satisfaction. They erected schools in many dark, destitute places, and adopted various other means of diffusing knowledge through the Highlands.

For several successive years the general assembly published its earnest recommendation of the society, exhorting all the parishes to make collections for the benevolent object; till, at length, the society reckoned among its subscribers many of the greatest names in the kingdom, and was enabled to command sums equal to the accomplishment of great and excellent designs.

If queen Ann gratified her Scotch subjects by aiding them in this good work, she deeply displeased them by introducing among them another alteration, still more calculated to diffuse knowledge, religion, and happi-

ness through the country. The queen's tory ministry, justly indignant to see episcopalians denied toleration in the north, while presbyterians enjoyed it in England, introduced a bill to allow the episcopal clergy the use of their liturgy, and in effect to grant a general toleration in Scotland. When king William had attempted to carry such a bill in the Scotch presbyterian parliament, it was thrown out; and now the general assembly presented to the queen a long declaration setting forth "that the act of the year one thousand seven hundred and seven, for securing the protestant religion and presbyterian government in Scotland, was declared an essential and fundamental article of the treaty of union, that they could not but express, therefore, their surprise and affliction to hear of a bill for such a large and almost boundless toleration, not only threatening the overthrow of their church, but giving license to errors and blasphemy, to the dishonour of God, the scandal of religion, and the confusion of that church and nation: and they did beseech, nay obtest her majesty, by the mercy of God, to interpose her authority against such a manifest and ruining encroachment." Their pitiful wailings received such attention as is due to the cries of those who seek to deprive their fellow creatures of those most sacred rights which they claim for themselves. The bill passed, and with a clause which blew to flames the slumbering embers of presbyterian intolerance; for the magistrates, who were before obliged to execute the sentences of the ecclesiastical judicatories, as soon as ever the kirk chose to deliver over the stubborn sinner to the secular arm, were now forbidden to interfere with any who did not turn papists or blasphemers. Thus stripped of all

their temporal power, the spiritual censures of the establishment were reduced to the same level with those of the dissenters, to exercise their authority only in the court of conscience, beyond which the church of Christ on earth has no jurisdiction. To cover the sinister designs of the party which executed the good work, and to recommend it to the whigs, all the Scotch episcopal clergy, who wished to receive the benefit of this toleration, were to take the oath of abjuration. As, however, it was not intended to enforce this oath, which it was foreseen they would refuse, the same obligation was imposed on all the presbyterian ministers; but designedly framed in such terms as would be to them highly objectionable. Both parties were thus exempt from the oath, on the hard terms of being kept upon sufferance.

The dissensions which arose among the presbyterian clergy on account of this oath, were greatly increased by the passing of a bill for restoring the right of patronage, which had been abolished by an act in king William's reign. It was a vital principle of presbyterianism, that the parishes had a scriptural right to choose their own ministers; so that this bill, which introduced such an innovation as to entitle a lay patron to nominate the minister, was an evident violation of the act of union, which confirmed the presbyterian church in all its rights and privileges for ever. The assembly, therefore, presented to her majesty an address of remonstrance against this infraction of the treaty; but in vain, for the same queen, who had solemnly ratified the union, now openly blasted the credit of the public faith and her own veracity by wresting from the kirk one of its dearest privileges. It certainly was impolitic to teach

the offended people, by the example of their governors, to hold the most solemn laws and sacred charters in sovereign contempt: and like many other violations of public faith, it led to consequences which the rulers would have gladly avoided; for, by creating divisions among the Scotch presbyterians, it multiplied the number of dissenters from the establishment in the British empire.

We have now seen, in the course of two short reigns, the presbyterian church in Scotland re-established in all its exclusive honours, and again stripped of its power, and left the shadow of its former self. The law of patronage, indeed, has defiled the purity of the establishment, by introducing many a worthless hireling to the pastoral charge, as the reward of his subserviency to the interest or pleasures of an infidel or profligate patron, which every catholic friend of true religion must deeply regret. But the toleration which has only pared the nails of a stern virago, and left the kirk to the use of her purely spiritual weapons, is a blessing to the earth and to the kirk herself; for it has prevented her from executing many a persecuting measure, which would have pulled down upon her head the anger of that God who is jealous of his exclusive rights over conscience, and in the present day, would render her odious to every man of reflection. The toleration for the episcopal clergy has also rendered the Scotch establishment a body more pure and homogeneous; for as episcopacy had been more than once established and promoted with all the influence of a court, it was not to be supposed that all who had professed these sentiments, would abandon them the moment presbytery was restored. There were, on the contrary, in the year one thou-

sand seven hundred and seven, a hundred and sixty-five episcopal ministers who still retained their parish churches and stipends'. This anomalous party produced a schism in the bosom of the established church ; for they pleaded for a middle state of souls after death, for prayers for the dead, for the Lord's supper as a propitiatory sacrifice, for the necessity of confession of sins to a priest, and absolution in order to forgiveness, for anointing with oil in baptism and on other occasions, for the necessity of episcopal ordination and baptism, in order to salvation, for bowing towards the altar and at the name of Jesus, with other articles equally abhorrent from the protestantism of the Scotch nation. These discordant materials now separated, and the episcopalians erected chapels for their worship. Those who had chosen to withdraw from the presbyterian establishment, during the whole of William's reign, had confined themselves to their own houses, where they either used no liturgic service, or employed Charles the first's Scotch liturgy ; but they now complimented the queen and the English episcopalians, by adopting their common prayer book.

The established church in Scotland claims high veneration for the efforts which it employed to purify itself at the revolution, and render its halcyon days subservient to the interests of genuine religion ; for we may challenge any other establishment under the sun to produce a list of so many measures adopted to render the clergy what they ought to be, and to consecrate to the best interests of the people, the powers received from the state. The general assemblies of

• Y Brown, vol. II. p. 346. Ker's memoirs say, that the episcopalians formed near half the kingdom.

the church must, at that period, have been under a predominant influence of real religion, or of conscientious solicitude to discharge with fidelity the sacred trust reposed in its bosom. As good intentions are more common, because more easy, than good conduct, it is probable that much of the excellence of the Scotch establishment never existed but on paper; yet there certainly were many excellent results from the numerous decrees which were passed, and the spirit of reformation, which then prevailed, has handed down its blessings to the present age. From the deplorable effects of Charles and James' reign, more infamous, if possible, in north, than in south Britain, Scotland so far emerged as to become again renowned for sobriety and religious character. The Sabbath was kept with a strictness which at once bespoke and promoted the prevalence of Christian principle; public worship was attended in a manner of which the English have no idea; and the divine Word was preached and expounded with so much judgment and diligence, that the Scotch church may claim the high praise of having produced some of the best expositors of the sacred Writings. The Scripture songs which were then introduced, were a step towards that grand improvement of Christian worship which has since so generally substituted evangelical hymns for the ancient prosaic versions of the psalms.

Amidst all this reformation in the church, loud and heavy were the complaints raised against her by some of the most serious and rigid presbyterians. For it was notorious that many who had been defiled with the abominations of former reigns, now rushed into the restored kirk, only to take the same care of their own interests in the new order of things, as they had

ever manifested, when the best men in the land were suffering the loss of all that was dear to them in life. Many, also, who were eager and zealous for presbytery, were not influenced so much by conviction of its divine authority, as by hatred of episcopacy, which had rendered itself infamous to all who loved their country, or respected even a decent appearance of morality in religion.

Scarcely had Scotland begun to enjoy the happy fruits of the restoration of religion, before even the friends of the union complained, that its temporal advantages were more than counterbalanced by the introduction of sinful practices from England. The Sabbath began to be profaned by the driving of cattle from one country to the other, and by various unnecessary labours. The societies for reformation dwindled away. The nobility and gentry, by degrees, abandoned family worship, and threw off even the form of religion; for, spending much of their time in England, they either contracted a fondness for the more worldly accommodating hierarchy; or else, neglecting public worship altogether, they refused, on their return to Scotland, to submit to the severities of the kirk in discipline or worship. Oaths of office were so multiplied as to increase perjury and destroy the solemnity of an oath; while such Scotchmen as served the prince in England or Ireland, were compelled to profane the Sacrament of the Lord's supper to the purposes of a civil test. But the most disgraceful stain on the virgin purity of the Scotch kirk was the intolerance which reigned in her councils; for, like the English establishment, she gave those who dissented from her no room to render to her grateful affections for permission to enjoy their sentiments and worship, in

peace; since, whatever toleration either of these churches seemed to exercise, was forced upon them by the secular government. The tone of the kirk was either that of haughty unrelenting defiance to all dissentients; or the despicable whine of lamentation over the impiety of those governors who forbade them to rule the national conscience with a rod of iron. Such a spirit was the more inexcusably guilty in the eighteenth century, because the Scotch then saw the truly Christian principle of toleration exercised in England, under an establishment which they considered far inferior to their own, and enjoyed by their brethren of the presbyterian communion. But this could not reconcile them to the golden rule, of yielding to others what they required for themselves; so that the state was left to the necessity of compelling them to adopt a practice which they, who should have taught it as a duty, abhorred as a national sin, and deplored as a misfortune fatal to the glory of their church. This was often the meaning of the cant phrases, 'bemoaning the neglect of a covenanted work of reformation,' and 'repenting of the breach of the Lord's covenant;' for this covenant, made before toleration came down from heaven to bless the earth, bound those who entered into it to extirpate all whom they deemed heretics. This spirit is so hostile to the religion of Jesus, that its prevalence reduces the character of the Scotch church far below that standard of excellence, to which she had otherwise been exalted by her numerous superior Christian virtues.

The eminent divines which Scotland has produced, are well known to all who are familiar with the history of the Christian church; and those who departed during the stormy ages which preceded the revolu-



tion, would fill a volume. But of those who come within our cognizance, we can give but two names ; one renowned for eminent sanctity and usefulness as a preacher of the Gospel ; the other for singular wisdom in the management of ecclesiastical affairs.

Robert Fleming was born in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty, at Bathens, where his father, James Fleming, was minister ; for he was descended from ancestors renowned in the church of Scotland. After studying languages with great success, in the university of Edinburgh, he removed to St. Andrew's, where he received lectures in theology from the celebrated Rutherford, whose letters display the exalted devotion of the men whom the Stewarts hunted into prisons. As Mr. Robert Fleming's talents and piety are said to have been "rath ripe ;" he was, at the age of twenty-three, settled pastor of Cambuslang, a place afterwards rendered remarkable for the religious impressions which were there produced on multitudes. Here he laboured with much success, till the restoration expelled him, with a wife and seven children, whom he cheerfully committed to the kind Providence which never forsook them. He afterwards preached at Edinburgh and the adjacent places, as far as the iniquity of those times would admit ; but, in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-eight, he removed to take charge of a congregation at Rotterdam, where he rested from his labours July the twenty-fifth, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-four. His secret religion appears, from his diary and private papers, to have been most eminent and delightful. Like Enoch "he walked with God, and before his translation obtained this testimony, that he pleased

God." His labours from the press extended his celebrity, and his usefulness through different countries, among various denominations of Christians, and to the highest ranks of life. Daniel Burgess, who gave his memoirs at the close of a funeral sermon which he preached for him, says, "in the English court the sun and moon, as well as other rare stars thereof, admired holy Fleming, and shone propitiously on him." His works are, the *Treatise of Earthquakes*; the *One Thing Necessary*; the *Truth and Certainty of the Protestant Faith*; the *Epistolary Discourse, dedicated to queen Mary*; the *Survey of Quakerism*; the *Present Aspect of the Times*; the *Healing Work, on Account of the Divisions in Scotland*; the *Fulfilling of the Scriptures*; and the *Confirming Work of Religion*, a most excellent book; to which are prefixed the names and commendatory testimonies of Dr. Bates, Mr. Mede, Howe, Cole, Sylvester, Stowers, and Williams; and to the *Fulfilling of the Scripture*, those of Watts, Reynolds, Bradbury, Neal, and many others.

Principal Carstairs departed, indeed, from this mortal scene the year after the first period of our history closes; but as he was a distinguished actor in the scenes which we have described, it may better suit the ends, if not the rules, of history, to mention his name now than to refer him to a future part of the work.

William Carstairs was born in a village near Glasgow, where his father was a minister. He early directed his active and vigorous mind to the study of theology, but having conceived a hearty abhorrence for the conduct of the government, both towards the civil and religious liberties of his country, he judged it

prudent to remove to the university of Utrecht; where his industry and talents, free from the tyranny of the Stewarts and the bishops, soon raised him to distinction. He became acquainted with the pensionary Fagel, and attached to the prince of Orange. On his return to Scotland, to procure a license to teach theology, he was so disgusted with the pride and insolence of archbishop Sharp, who then ruled the church, that he quickly fled again to Holland, the land of religious freedom. He there formed the most important connections, and was employed by the prince of Orange in negotiations in Holland, England, and Scotland. Upon the elevation of the prince to the British throne, Carstairs was nominated king's chaplain for Scotland, and employed in settling the affairs of that kingdom. His reasonings, remonstrances, and entreaties, pursued with prudent firmness, induced William to overturn episcopacy and restore the presbyterian church in Scotland. The death of king William was a deep affliction to him, and a blow to his interests; for the monarch had not yet rewarded him as he designed. But he was continued in his office of chaplain by queen Ann, and was invited to become principal of the university of Edinburgh. He was one of the ministers of the city, and four times moderator of the general assembly. He promoted the interests of learning as well as of religion; for he procured an augmentation of the salaries of professors in the Scotch universities. He was one of the last who suffered torture before the privy council, to make him disclose the secrets with which he was entrusted. But he resisted to the last; and when, at the revolution, torture ceased to be an instrument of government, the thumb-screw, as of no

further use to them, was presented to him by the council. By episcopalians, he has been abused as a cunning dissembler, who received the episcopal revenues to defend Scotland against bishops. But when those revenues fell into the king's hands, it was no crime in him to accept any part of them as a reward for his services and sufferings. It was indeed a crime, though not judged so in his day, to devote himself so much to the affairs of state. But he is pronounced by those, who knew him well, to be distinguished by zeal for truth, and love of moderation and order, combined with prudence and humanity. He died in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifteen; and a collection of his letters and state papers, with an account of his life, was published by Dr. M'Cormick, in the year one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four.

Mr. Thomas Halyburton was born at Duplin, in the parish of Aberdalgy, near Perth, December the twenty-fifth, in the year one thousand six hundred and seventy-four. His father had been minister of that parish, but was ejected in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two, with about three hundred more, for refusing to submit to episcopacy. As his father died in the year one thousand six hundred and eighty-two, and the prelates continued to harrass all who refused to bow to their altars, his mother took her family to Holland, where she placed this son at the school of Erasmus. When the storm broke away, and the sun began to shine on the presbyterians, he was brought back to finish his education in his native country. After leaving the university, he officiated for a time as chaplain in a noble family, but in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-nine,

he was licensed to preach, and on the following year was appointed minister of the parish of Ceres. Amidst severe indisposition, which almost incapacitated him for his pastoral duties, he maintained a course of laborious studies, which turned principally on the deistical controversy, rendered peculiarly interesting to him, by the conflicts of his own mind concerning the authenticity of divine revelation. His writings, on that important theme, display the superior acumen and energy which are produced by a deep sense of personal interest in the result of a controversy, and prove him to have possessed a mind of superior powers. He was therefore entitled to the honour which sought him out amidst his modest retirement, and appointed him, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ten, professor of divinity in the New college of St. Andrews. He delivered his inaugural discourse in confutation of an atheistical pamphlet, entitled, "Epistola Archimedis ad regem Gelonem," in which he displayed the result of that deep reflection on the subject of natural as well as revealed religion, to which he had been impelled by his most distressing mental conflicts. He was, however, soon snatched from this enlarged sphere of usefulness; for a pleurisy laid the foundation of that disorder which removed him to the state of perfection, September the twenty-third, in the year one thousand seven hundred and twelve.

His dying words were too numerous to be recorded here, as they form a whole chapter in his memoirs; but they are replete with wisdom, piety, and gladness allied to the delights of heaven. He said, "I am now in my best pulpit, preaching that Saviour whom I have long loved to honour in public, and who is

now precious to me in the hour of need. I am looking within the vail, but am obliged to glance aside, lest the full blaze of glory should overwhelm me." After his death, his friends published, at Edinburgh, his treatise, entitled, "Natural Religion insufficient, and revealed necessary to Man's Happiness," in which particularly the writings of the learned lord Herbert, the great patron of deism, to wit, his books, "*de Veritate, de Religione Gentilium*," and his "*Religio Laici*," in as far as they assert nature's light able to conduct us to future blessedness, are considered and fully answered. He shews largely that the light of nature is exceedingly defective in its discoveries of a Deity, the way of serving him, the means of human happiness, and the motives to obedience. He pursues the infidels into all their retreats, and though inelegant in his style and manner, and by far too serious for those who only speculate upon a divine revelation, he is peculiarly satisfactory to those who, like himself, pursue their enquiries in order to be safe for eternity. There are also extant some sermons by Halyburton, and a treatise, entitled, the great Concern of Salvation<sup>z</sup>.

<sup>z</sup> See Halyburton's Life, edited by Dr. Watts, and Leland's View of the deistical Writers.

## SECTION III.

## STATE OF RELIGION IN IRELAND DURING THIS PERIOD.

WHEN Jesus Christ sent forth his apostles, he commanded them to convert sinners by the preaching of the Gospel. Charlemagne, fired with zeal for the salvation of the Saxons, dispatched a powerful army to compel them with the edge of the sword to renounce paganism, and embrace the Christian faith. The English government, wishing to deliver the Irish from the errors of popery, and communicate to them the blessings of the reformation, employed a method different from both—it made them protestants by “act of parliament.” Men of ordinary ideas may be looking out for a Luther, a Calvin, or a Latimer itinerating through the country, and in every place warning the people of the danger of continuing in their former superstitions, and proclaiming the Gospel of peace in all its purity and simplicity. But where shall such men be found in Hibernian records? Two or three doctors there were, who appeared as champions for protestantism in the field of controversy. But are scholastic disputations the means of divine appointment for the conversion of souls to Christ? Perhaps they confounded a few of the Romish priesthood: but something else is necessary to render the mass of mankind wise unto salvation.

Should any be ever disposed to imitate the Irish mode of reformation, it may be proper to inform them,

that it was enacted by authority of parliament, "that after a specified time such a creed shall be believed, and such a rubric used by all bishops, priests, and deacons who shall continue to enjoy the emoluments and revenues of the church and do the duty: and those who refuse shall be ejected from their benefices, and others put in their place." The inconceivable absurdity of such a procedure, might lead those who have never examined the subject, to consider it as a figment of the author's brains; but it is historical truth, and claims tears of regret.

But let not Ireland be considered as alone the land of such monstrous absurdities and blunders. Too much of a similar proceeding will be found in various countries of Europe. The reformation in the sixteenth century, has been praised unspeakably beyond the truth; and scenes of pure doctrine and fervent piety every where prevailing have been formed in the imagination, which had no existence any where else. The number of the reformed in mind, heart, and life was, in every country, but small, in comparison of what is commonly supposed; and bore no proportion to the mass of the community.

In France the reformation, as being entirely unconnected with the state, was carried on, perhaps, in a more legitimate way, and to a greater extent than in any other European nation. The reading of the Scriptures, and the preaching of the Gospel were the only means employed to make proselytes. No worldly motives existed to influence the mind; and converts had nothing to expect from their religion, but the salvation of their souls\*. In Italy and Spain,

\* At the national synod of Rochelle, where Beza presided in the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-one, the year before the



where the reformation was afterwards crushed, the conversions were genuine, but they were not numerous. Scotland, perhaps, should be named next to France, for the number of persons who became Christians, when they became protestants. Switzerland and Germany occupy the next place.

England follows, but at a distance. There were persons, both among the clergy and laity, who, for their purity of doctrine cannot be too highly praised: but the number was small: not a twentieth part of what is generally supposed. The mass of the nation, both clergy and laity, whatever was the form of religion established, remained in the grossest ignorance, and a total disregard of the principles and spirit of the Gospel. The change of religion was a political measure which, the papists say, took its rise from the monarch's lust, and pride, and covetousness, and the rapacity of the nobility and gentry, who eagerly longed for the spoils of the church. Denmark and Sweden were far behind England: and their reformation was little more than an act of regal power, profiting by the treasures of ages of superstition. The saints, the confessors, the martyrs, and the laborious preachers of Denmark and Sweden to instruct the people and convert them, it will be almost as difficult to find, as the clerical reformers of our sister isle. To Ireland, however, the pre-eminence must be given for the striking novelty of the mode in which she was reformed. If God in his infinite wisdom over-

massacre of St. Bartholomew, it was found that the number of the reformed churches amounted to two thousand one hundred and fifty. In many of these there were ten thousand members, and in most of these, a plurality of pastors. Quick's Synodicon, vol. I. p. 59.

ruled for good those works of human policy, by raising up, in a future age, a multitude of faithful ministers to preach the Gospel in its purity in those countries which were thus reformed, no thanks are due to the worldly politicians who introduced the change: all the praise belongs to infinite wisdom and goodness.

But can there reside in civil rulers a rightful power to alter the religion of the people according to their will? Has God vested them with authority to oblige their subjects to profess a religion contrary to the conviction of their own minds? Who can produce the important charter which conveys so astonishing a right? But not to enter further on the discussion of the subject, it may be remarked, that the evil effects of so preposterous a conduct remain in Ireland to the present day, and create difficulties which the ablest political casuists find it beyond their abilities to remove.

The result of the Irish mode of reformation was, as might be expected, feeble and ineffectual. Ecclesiastical dignities were bestowed on men who professed themselves converts to the protestant religion. Many who came from England, of whom there was a continual influx, and some of the descendants of the English, who had been long settled in the country, submitted to the new rubric, though but little acquainted with the principles, or influenced by the spirit of the Gospel. The mass of the people, feeling no efficacy on their hearts from the act of parliament, continued most strenuously attached to the Romish church in its grossest forms of superstition. A host of ecclesiastics, composing a regular hierarchy minis-

tered to their spiritual necessities: and as they were stripped of their benefices, and depended on the people for their support, their emoluments were in proportion to their assiduity and zeal.

The erection of Trinity college at Dublin, was a measure well adapted to produce, at a future time, men of learning and piety for the newly-established protestant church; but its operations must be necessarily slow, and its effects remote. James Usher, the first student, who afterwards rose to the archbishopric of Armagh, for learning, piety and moderation deserves a place in the first rank of human beings. But though he, and some others, who would have adorned any church, did every thing they could to promote the best of causes, the circumstances in which they were placed, were so unfavourable, that the fruit of their labours was comparatively small: the great body of the people still remained zealous adherents to the Romish faith.

How scanty the fruits of the reformation were throughout the country at large, a view of the state of one diocese, more than half a century afterwards, presented to the world by its bishop, will too plainly prove. William Bedell, D. D. was presented to the united sees of Kilmore and Ardach, about the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-nine, and continued till the year one thousand six hundred and forty-one. In his life, which was drawn up from his papers by bishop Burnet, there are the following memorials of the spiritual condition of his charge. In a letter to archbishop Laud he thus describes it:—  
“The cathedral church of Ardach, one of the most ancient in Ireland, and said to be built by St. Patrick, together with the bishop’s house there are down to

the ground. The church here (at Kilmore) built, but without bell or steeple, font or chalice. The parish churches all in a manner ruined, and unroofed, and unrepaired. The people, saving a few British planters here and there (which are not the tenth part of the remnant), obstinate recusants. A popish clergy, more numerous by far than we, and in full exercise of all jurisdiction ecclesiastical, by their vicar general and his officials. The primate himself lives in my parish, within two miles of my house; the bishop in another part of my diocese further off. Every parish hath its priest; and some two or three a piece, and their mass-houses also; in some places mass is said in the churches. Friars there are in divers places, who go about, though not in their habit, and by their importunate begging impoverish the people, who indeed are generally very poor, as from that cause, so from their paying double tithes, to their own clergy and ours; and which they forget not to reckon among other causes, the oppression of the court ecclesiastical, which in very truth, my lord, I cannot excuse, but do seek to reform. For our own there are seven or eight ministers in each diocese of good sufficiency; and (which is no small cause of the continuance of the people in popery still) English, which have not the tongue of the people, nor can perform any divine offices, or converse with them; and which hold, many of them, two or three, or four or more vicarages apiece; and even the clerkships themselves are in like manner conferred upon the English; and sometimes two or three, or more upon one man, and ordinarily bought, sold, or let to farm. His majesty is now with the greatest part of this country, as to their hearts and consciences, but at the pope's

discretion<sup>b</sup>." In another place the biographer says, "bishop Bedell observed with much regret, that the English had all along neglected the Irish, as a nation not only conquered, but indisciplinable; and that the clergy had scarcely considered them as a part of their charge, but had left them wholly into the hands of their own priests, without taking any other care of them but the making them pay their tithes<sup>c</sup>."

This is certainly a hideous picture; but if we consider that the county of Cavan, in which the dioceses lye, was more favourable to protestantism, than all the south and west of Ireland, it may be looked upon as a fair representation of the religious state of the country at that time.

While this excellent man, and others of the same spirit were doing all in their power for the suppression of error, and the propagation of divine truth, successful aid was given by the labours of puritans from England, and presbyterians from Scotland. In the reign of James the first it was determined to colonize the northern part of Ireland: and for this purpose a large supply of new inhabitants was introduced from Britain. To supply them with spiritual teachers in their new abodes created no small difficulty at first. Those of the clergy who were provided with livings, had no inclination to remove, and such as had expectations, did not like to give them up for Irish preferment. The puritans, on the other hand, being oppressed and harrassed by their diocessans, or driven from their cure for the omission of ceremonies, some of them were prevailed on to ac-

<sup>b</sup> Dated at Kilmore, one thousand six hundred and thirty. Bedell's life, p. 4, 5, 6, 7.

<sup>c</sup> Ibid, p. 114.

company or follow the new settlers into the sister isle; and they carried with them that zeal for the salvation of immortal souls, which they had displayed at home. The Scotch colonists brought over ministers of their own kirk, pious and active men, who laboured among them with great diligence and success.

As they were at first almost the only protestant preachers in that part of the country, they officiated in the parish churches, and the tithes were assigned them for their support. To the honour of the bishops of Raphoe and Elphin, they displayed a moderation which shews their zeal for Christianity to have been stronger than their attachment to the modes and forms of their sect: and as similar instances of liberal conduct have seldom occurred in the annals of ecclesiastical history, it claims to be recorded with the highest praise. As the Scotch ministers were immoveably attached to presbytery, that they might not lose the benefit of their useful and necessary services, they officiated at their ordination as presbyters, in conjunction with other ministers, omitted what they knew would give offence, and acted in every part in the most gracious and condescending manner. All this was on purpose that these good Scotchmen might take the charge of congregations which would have otherwise been destitute, or have fallen into hands which were unqualified for the work.

The most eminent of these ministers were Mr. Blair, Mr. Josiah Welch, Mr. Stewart, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Dunbar, and Mr. Livingston, and two English puritans, Mr. Ridge, and Mr. Calvert. Their labours were exceedingly abundant, and crowned with extraordinary success. The scanty records of their

ministry, which time has spared, convey the highest delight to the Christian reader of ecclesiastical history ; because they display the powerful and extensive influence of divine truth, and a striking resemblance of the effects produced by the preaching of the apostles of Christ, when the Holy Spirit was poured out from on high. Every good minister, and every zealous believer will look with rapture on the scene, and sigh for the return of such a season of grace and love, and an equal measure of holy influence of the principles of the Gospel on the souls of men through every part of the Christian church<sup>d</sup>.

This prosperous state of things continued till archbishop Laud (a man whom it is an act of self-denial to name, without an epithet of dispraise) arose to the summit of ecclesiastical dominion. The energy of his character diffused his spirit through the Irish, as well as the English establishment. He frowned on the moderation of the tolerant bishops, and compelled them to exact rigorous conformity. The most zealous of the presbyterian ministers were driven away, and what the English prelates began, another judgment from heaven completed. The Irish massacre, as it is called, in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-one, put an entire stop to their labours for a season.

That dreadful event, zealous protestants assert to have arisen, in addition to their popish zeal and fury, from the encouragement which the court, but especially the queen and her adherents, gave the native Irish to rise in arms in order to assist the royal cause against the disobedience of the Scotch, and the stern demands of the English parliament. The Roman

<sup>d</sup> Gillies's Historical Collections, vol. I. p. 316—327.

catholic writers say, that the insurrection had its origin in the injustice of the English government, which had robbed them of their paternal fields, and bestowed them on strangers ; and in the ecclesiastical oppression, which had degraded the holy faith of their ancestors, reduced their priesthood to a state of beggary, and compelled them to pay tithes to men whose religion they abhorred, whose language they did not understand, and who, in many parishes, had not a single individual to attend upon their ministry. To free themselves from these acts of tyranny, they snatched up the sword at what they thought a favourable season, in hopes of again becoming masters of their own country, and gaining the ascendancy, or expelling the foreigners who had unjustly assumed dominion over them. Such, they alledge, were the designs of the leaders, but they were defeated by the savage fury of their plebeian adherents, who overleaped all bounds of restraint, and spread massacre and destruction, where their superiors meant only conquest and subjugation.

Cromwell's expedition to Ireland crushed the papists, gave peace and security to the protestants, enabled such as had fled, to return to their professions, and left them at full liberty to resume their former pursuits. His camp bore all the marks of the strongest attachment to religion : both officers and soldiers spent the intervals of military duty in reading the Scriptures, in prayer, exhortation, and pious discourse. Among the leaders and their families, it prevailed as much as among the common men<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>c</sup> "I have been at head-quarters at Kilkenny," says a Mr. Thomas Patient in a letter to Oliver Cromwell, "ever since a little before my lady Ireton came over. I do, by good experience,



The conquest of the country being completed, a considerable portion of land was allotted in lieu of pay to the partners of his toils and dangers: both officers and men became proprietors of estates in Ireland; and they sent for their friends, or acquaintances from England, to assist them in the cultivation of their new estates. Among both of these classes, were many whose sentiments differed from the episcopal church. In consequence of this, new dissenting congregations were formed both in the capital and in all the principal towns of the south and west. The presbyterians and independents, who formed the largest body, at first had separate places of worship, but they afterwards united. By the baptists, churches were established at Dublin, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Clonmell, Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Galway, and in the north near Carrickfergus. A letter, which they wrote to their brethren in England, in the year one thousand six hundred and fifty-three, gives a favourable idea, both of their orthodoxy and piety<sup>f</sup>.

Those exertions of individuals were countenanced and aided by the energies of the new government. In his public capacity, Cromwell was the patron both of piety and learning, with less of a party spirit than any ruler in Britain, during the century in which he lived. He compelled the popish powers on the con-

find, as far as I can discover, the power of God's grace in *her soul*: a woman acquainted with temptations, and breathing after Christ." The reverend Mark Noble, in his history of the house of Cromwell, vol. I. p. 168, 9, brings this as a proof, that Bridget, Cromwell's eldest daughter, the wife of Henry Ireton, was early addicted to enthusiasm.

<sup>f</sup> Baptist's Annual Register, for 1790, p. 13—20.

to allow freedom of worship to the English merchants; he obliged the duke of Savoy to grant repose to the persecuted vaudois; he formed a plan by which ten thousand pounds a year were allotted for the conversion of the heathen; and at home, he protected and encouraged every good minister who would give security for living peaceably under the protectorate. Men of eminence for learning likewise; in many instances, found him a munificent friend, provided they were not hostile to his authority. He sent at this time to Ireland some of the most celebrated preachers to propagate the protestant faith in that barren land; and men of superior learning were prevailed with to go over to Trinity college, Dublin, in order to advance the cause of literature and piety in that important seminary.

Under the government of the protector, the presbyterians in the north, who were increasing considerably in number, did not find themselves so much at their ease as the dissenters in the south. Warmly attached to the house of Stewart, they could not brook the new order of things; and considering the protector's authority as an unjust usurpation, they refused to take the oaths to the commonwealth, to observe the fast days appointed by authority, and to comply with its ordinances. Henry Cromwell, when lord lieutenant of Ireland, took considerable pains to argue them into actual subjection to the existing powers. But he could not succeed: compliance with what they disapproved, was not a feature of the presbyterians of the seventeenth century. Provoked by their refusal, he withdrew the parochial support which they had till then enjoyed, and left them to find their subsistence in some other way.

Considering the spirit of that age, the treatment may, by some, be thought mild; but Henry Cromwell would have shewed himself a wiser man, if he had let them quietly pursue their own way. The demand of such explicit homage was unnecessary, as well as the punishment he inflicted. Had they been permitted to enjoy their own sentiments, no harm would have ensued; the people would have thrown their shuttle or cultivated their fields, with as much diligence as the most strenuous commonwealth men; they would have cherished in their own minds, and taught their families, the principles of religion, with as much assiduity and zeal, and have paid their proportion of taxes for the support of government when required. They might have uttered some angry speeches and severe expressions against their rulers; but in ordinary times the effect of these is small: if they be treated with tolerable equity, their disaffection evaporates in words; and when they find that no notice is taken of them, they grow weary of finding fault, and become silent. A dignified statesman, of liberal ideas, who adopts this plan, will be amply repaid in the public tranquillity. By overlooking their sullenness, and letting them enjoy the pleasure of murmuring, he will render them perfectly harmless. It is only when they are handled with violence that they sting: let them buzz and hum without molestation, and they will do no injury. There has, in general, been greater danger to governments from men who will take every oath and engagement which the rulers think proper to impose, but whose consciences being restrained by none, there is no tie by which they can be held.

In a few years the Irish presbyterians were gratified with the object of their warmest wishes—the restoration of their beloved house of Stewart. But like many worldly things, which are viewed in the pursuit with rapturous delight, when attained and enjoyed, it sadly disappointed their expectations. They were not restored to their former privileges. Gratitude for attachment or sufferings in the royal cause, formed no part of the character of Charles the second. The episcopal church resumed all her ancient honours; and she had contracted by her afflictions a degree of sternness and rigour, which she did not possess in her former state of existence. Her clergy had all the tithes, while in the north, especially in Ulster, the presbyterians had nearly all the people, and all the labour. Importunity, however, obtained a pittance from royal bounty, which dispensed five hundred pounds a year to be divided among the presbyterian ministers.

From the restoration to the revolution, the condition of the protestants who were not of the communion of the established church, was far more tolerable than that of their English dissenting brethren. Some of the persecuted ministers then visited Ireland, and laboured among the congregations in the capital, and those in the towns of the south and west; while the presbyterians of Ulster enjoyed the repose of paradise, when compared with the state of their own denomination in Scotland. They were, however, not without a taste of sufferings. Irish prisons could boast of protestant ministers as their tenants; and some were obliged to seek their liberty by fleeing from their homes. The rapid strides which James the second

† Barber's Remarks on the Bishop of Cloyne's Present State of the Church of Ireland, p. 56, 7.

made in Ireland towards the establishment of popery, filled the protestants out of the established church, as well as those within its pale, with terror and dismay; and recalled to their minds all the horrors of the year one thousand six hundred and forty-one.

After enduring these mental agonies for a short time, the revolution brought them the prospect of deliverance; but they had not the happiness, as their English brethren, to see all their fears speedily dispelled. James's party in Ireland was numerous and powerful; and the contest for the crown was transferred by him to that country. It was therefore not till the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one that the total conquest of the island by the victorious arms of his rival set their hearts at ease, and conferred on them the secure enjoyment of religious liberty. William was the first king of England who had respect for the rights of conscience, and who had imbibed the idea that his subjects ought to enjoy the liberty of worshipping God according to their own judgment: and for this sentiment, had he conferred no other favours, his name deserves, by the friends of religion, to be held in everlasting remembrance. During his reign the presbyterians and other dissenters had rest, and were edified and multiplied. Considering the number of the Irish protestants who were without the pale of the established church, and their importance to the safety and welfare of that kingdom, he thought it but reasonable that they should receive more pecuniary aid than had been given them since the restoration; and in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety, he bestowed on the presbyterians in the north a grant of twelve hundred pounds a year towards their support: eight hundred pounds

were added by his successor, for the maintenance of the dissenting ministers in the south.

In the early part of Anne's reign, a Stewart was felt to be on the throne: and the baleful influence seemed to have descended into the souls of the people. A detestable spirit of harsh intolerance and stern bigotry took possession of the Irish protestants; and a bill of peculiar severity against the Roman catholics, was brought into parliament, and sent over to England for the approbation of the ministers of state. More compassionate than the Irish legislature, they wished to prevent it from passing into a law, and tacked to it a clause of precisely the same nature as the English test act, not doubting but the presbyterians, whose influence in both houses was great, would never consent to an act which shut them out from every office under government, unless they should consent to receive the sacrament according to the usage of the established church of Ireland. Hatred of popery, however, prevailed over both the principles of Christianity and their own interests: they gave the bill their support, and it passed. They afterwards applied for relief, but could obtain none; and they deserved none. Men who could sacrifice their principles on the altar of bigotry, and who could give up their own privileges and duties in order to heap miseries on the Roman catholics, merited a rod of no common size; and it was employed for their correction for near fourscore years. So long a time expired before the test act was repealed, and dissenters were admitted to equal privileges with their fellow subjects of the establishment.

During this reign the spirit of illiberality towards

the protestants of a different communion from the church, gradually increased, which is ascribed by bishop Burnet, in a great measure, to the influx of clergy from England on preferment, who brought with them the high-flying notions which were publickly maintained and defended by Sacheverell and his party.

The statesmen by whom the affairs of the British empire were conducted in the last years of this reign, combined to diffuse this spirit in a still more powerful degree; and the peers of Ireland, both spiritual and temporal, betrayed the baleful influence of the intoxicating draught.

A circumstance, in itself unimportant, drew forth their wrath. Mr. Fleming, and some other inhabitants of the town of Drogheda, of the presbyterian denomination, prepared a place of worship, and called a minister of their own faith to officiate for their edification. The magistrates and people of the place, unwilling that they should enjoy this reasonable privilege, entered a prosecution against their presbyterian neighbours, in order to compel them to shut up their house of worship. Conceiving themselves to be unjustly dealt with, the presbyterians applied to the lord lieutenant for redress. Wharton, the nobleman who then held that exalted office, had no more religion than Bolingbroke, the English minister; but happily he had, in this instance, less hypocrisy and more reason, and very properly put a stop to the fury of the Drogheda high-church zealots. The matter, however, was not permitted to rest here. The house of lords caught the spirit of the prosecutors, were petrified with terror at the consequences, and thought the subject of sufficient importance, to be the ground of

an address to her majesty. In this address they bitterly complain of lord Wharton for having abused her majesty's name, by ordering a *noli prosequi* against one Fleming, and others, for disturbing the peace of the town of Drogheda, by setting up a meeting-house, where there had been none for twenty-eight years before. In addition to this crime, the northern presbyterians had, in their zeal for proselytism, sent missionaries into several parts of the kingdom, where they had no call from the people, nor any congregation to support them; and as another act of criminality, by the abuse of the allowance of twelve hundred pounds a year, granted to them by her majesty for charitable purposes and other means, schism which had formerly been confined to the north, was spread into many other parts of the kingdom: on these accounts they would not be just in their duty to their sovereign or country, if they did not acquaint her majesty with the danger they apprehended from the great advances which presbytery and fanaticism had made; advances which, if not checked, they doubted not would in time end in the destruction of the constitution, both of church and state. They submitted, therefore, whether it was not proper to put a stop to these growing evils, by withdrawing from the presbyterians her majesty's bounty of twelve hundred pounds a year<sup>h</sup>.

Not long afterwards, Dr. Kirkpatrick, a presbyterian minister in the north, appeared in defence of his sect against this, and other accusations, and demonstrated the loyalty of the presbyterian body, ever since they had had an existence in Ireland. He argued, therefore, strenuously against the injustice of attempt-

<sup>h</sup> Plowden's History of Ireland, vol. I. p. 222, 3.



ing to ruin their character, and deprive them of the countenance and favour of the government, to which they ever had been, and still were, so cordially and zealously attached.

The same system of narrow bigotry and malicious hatred to every thing protestant without the pale of the established church, influenced the English ministry to extend the schism bill to the Irish presbyterians and dissenters; and though these formed a considerable portion of the protestant body, and the Roman catholics far exceeded them both in number, the cause of protestantism must be endangered, rather than they should not enjoy the pleasure of pouring out the vials of injury and insult upon their heads. So much were the kindred spirits of Ireland delighted with the measure, that, conceiving every thing completely in their power, they nailed up the doors of the meeting-houses at Antrim, Downpatrick, and Rathfriland<sup>1</sup>.

But how consoling the thought, that there is a supreme Ruler, who directs the affairs of nations, and can defeat the iniquitous purposes of crooked human policy! He appeared here in behalf of oppressed innocence, by a two-fold deliverance. Anne died on the day when the act should have been carried into execution, and she was succeeded by George the first, a prince of a liberal and excellent spirit, who banished from his councils the patrons of persecution; and under whose gentle rule all the protestant subjects of the British empire enjoyed the inestimable blessing of religious freedom.

Of the state of religion, during this period, among

<sup>1</sup> Barber's Remarks on Bishop of Cloyne's Present State of the Church of Ireland, p. 67.

the presbyterians in the north of Ireland, and the dissenters in the south, there are grounds for forming a favourable estimate. The great principles of evangelical truth were stedfastly maintained, and almost universally preached; and the attention of the ministers to the private duties of their office, merits a high degree of praise. A considerable number of persons too, who are entitled to the name of confessors, still survived; and they spread the benign influence of their holy example and fervent zeal through the various congregations to which they belonged.

## SECTION IV.

## STATE OF RELIGION IN AMERICA.

As the principles of the dissenters in the breasts of our ancestors first planted a considerable portion of the new world with European colonies, where that which is in England termed dissent is the predominant profession of a mighty empire, our history would not be complete without some account of the state of religion in the western continent. The providence of God, which triumphed over the persecutors of his servants, by rendering their rage the means of establishing the oppressed puritans in a land which should in future become an asylum for the persecuted, demands our grateful adoration. The rapid advancement of the United States in the comforts of civilized life, and the absence of all exclusive establishments of religion, with the attendant prosperity of different communions, must render that country so inviting to all who are oppressed for their dissent from a dominant religion, as either to preclude the attempt to re-kindle the flames of persecution, or to mock their fury by snatching from their rage all who were intended to feed the fires.

The first American colonists were members of a society of Christians in the north of England, who in the year one thousand six hundred and two, entered into a covenant with each other to study the Scriptures as the only rule of religion, and to follow this sacred light, rejecting all human inventions, and adopt-

ing every institution of the divine Word. But finding that it was impossible to pursue with success in their own country, a design which was so hateful to the reigning powers, they removed to Leyden, in Holland, within about seven or eight years after the first formation of their church. In this place of voluntary exile they enjoyed great privileges, and were highly respected; for the magistrates once said to the Walloons, who appeared before them for redress against their brethren, "these English have lived now ten years among us, and we have never had an accusation against any one of them, whereas your quarrels are continual."

But this English church was wounded with the manner in which the Sabbath was kept, or rather was profaned in Holland, against which they found all their remonstrances ineffectual. They perceived also that their children were incorporating with the Dutch families, or else were drawn away by the evil examples of the country. For these reasons they determined to pursue their original design of planting a scriptural (which in their view was synonymous with an independent) church in the world, by removing to America. They agreed that the younger part of the society should go first, while Mr. John Robinson, the pastor, remained with the elder and major part till it was judged proper for them to follow. On a day of fasting and prayer, to implore the divine blessing on their grand undertaking, Mr. Robinson preached to them from Ezra viii. 22: "then I proclaimed a fast there, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones, and for all our substance." The voyagers then took leave of the land which had kindly

received them "as strangers and sojourners;" and on July the second, in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty, parted with their brethren at Delft haven. Their beloved pastor having, like Paul, knelt down on the sea shore, and poured out his prayers to God for them, they embraced and wept in each others arms till the wind and tide compelled them to rend themselves asunder, leaving the Dutch, who were spectators of the scene, drowned in tears of sympathy. The *Speedwell* and *May Flower*, the vessels which they hired for the voyage, first touched at Southampton, to join those who were coming from London to accompany them in their expedition. They encountered various hardships and dangers on the seas; and instead of arriving at Hudson's river, as they intended, they were, by the treacherous compact of the captain with some Dutchmen, who wished to reserve that spot for themselves, conducted to cape Cod, which however the kind providence of God rendered the means of preserving them from the Indians by whom they had otherwise been murdered.

From the cultivated fields of Europe the first colony of a hundred persons arrived the ninth of November, in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty, on the shores of the vast deserts of America, where they beheld a most alarming contrast of every thing which had been familiar and dear to them in their native country. Immense woods, which extended their awful darkness down to the water's edge, presented an alarming prospect of herculean labours, while the miserable naked savages shocked the eye of the new comers, who had never yet seen man in his state of nature, and grieved the minds which viewed them as superstitious worship-

pers of the devil. The language of the Indians appeared to them a jargon of insurmountable difficulties; and their fierce aspect and barbarous customs must have excited some alarms in their breasts, when they reflected that they had not yet a single house to which they could retreat; that they had before them a long and severe winter; and that their friends were now separated from them by three thousand miles of sea. But they had learned, from their pious education, to value the pure ordinances of the Gospel as the first blessing on earth, and to abhor a false and superstitious religion, with impositions on conscience, as the greatest evil on this side hell. They, therefore, determined to endure the miseries of a desert as lighter than the moral ills of a depraved society, and to encounter the naked savages, whom they less dreaded than the cultivated heathens who, clothed with the robes of office, had for years abused the forms of law to deprive them of all that was dearest to them in life. The Indians also had been much diminished by sickness before the arrival of the colony, so that those who were left, were less formidable to the English, who, after examining the coast, founded, on the twenty-fifth of December, in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty, the town of Plymouth, of which Mr. John Carver was made governor.

The sufferings which the first settlers endured from the climate, from famine, disease, and the hostile neighbourhood of the Indians, would fill a volume. But the accelerated course of oppression drove across the Atlantic fresh bands of emigrants, who sought to share with their brethren the quiet enjoyment of civil rights and religious privileges. The colony was much

strengthened by the arrival of the *Arabella* and ten other ships in Salem river, with governor Winthrop, an excellent magistrate, who brought with him a royal charter for the government of Massachusetts colony. Shortly after ten more ships arrived, so that in one summer fifteen hundred persons landed in the new world, many of whom were possessed of such property as enabled them to add greatly to the comforts of the new settlement. What language could do justice to the delightful affections with which these confessors embraced each other at such an immense distance from their common country, when to the tie of countrymen was added the attachment of fellow-christians and fellow-sufferers in the best of causes; while the one party hailed the arrival of brethren, from a land whose very animals were dear to them, and the other smiled to behold Englishmen and Christian brethren in the remote deserts which were the native haunts of idolatrous Indians? As religion was the grand object of their emigration, they first laboured, as they said, to set up the tabernacle of God, to avail themselves of their freedom from priestly impositions, to establish that mode of worship and discipline which appeared to them exactly conformed to the divine Word, and calculated to promote the interests of vital religion. In a few years many congregational churches were formed, and supplied with pastors. For, during twelve years of Laud's administration in England, persons of all ranks, ministers and their congregations "kept sometimes dropping," says Cotton Mather, "sometimes flocking into New England."

Towards the end of the year one thousand six hundred and thirty, a part of the colony of Charlestown

removed and built the town which they called Boston, in compliment to the famous Mr. Cotton, the puritan minister of Boston, in England, whom they expected to come to be their pastor. From its inauspicious commencement, the town was, by a pun, called Lostown, but its favourable situation at length triumphed, and raised it to the rank of metropolis of the province. It was at first settled under the inspection of Mr. Johnson, a gentleman eminent for talents and piety; and the church, which was established there, chose, for its pastor, Mr. Wilson, who, for forty years maintained an exalted and unblemished character. Mr. John Cotton arrived shortly after, and was chosen assistant to Mr. Wilson, so that their lives were spent in combined labours, and by death their spirits were not long divided. Mr. Richard Mather, grandfather of Cotton Mather, the historian of New England, after some time, came to join these labourers in the western hemisphere.

As the original hives were overstocked, fresh swarms took flight for other spots where they built new towns, and formed additional churches. When, however, the English hierarchy was overthrown, the causes of emigration were removed, and there were not only few accessions to the colonies, but several ministers returned to labour in England. But to such extent had the spirit of emigration risen among the persecuted puritans, that seventy-seven ministers left Great Britain to plant churches in America. The celebrated Dr William Ames had intended to join them, and though death prevented the execution of his purpose, his widow, and children, and library were afterwards conveyed thither. Fourteen others, who had not completed their studies for the ministry



when they left England, both finished their education and entered on their pastoral labours in America. In twenty-seven years, from the first plantation of the colonies, forty-three churches were formed, and in an equal number of succeeding years, eighty churches more rose into existence.

Though the great body of the first settlers were eminently pious, and made religion their object in forming the new colonies, it must be supposed that there were some in their families who had not yet experienced the regenerating influence of the Gospel; for though they might be careful to bring none but religious servants, they could neither insure the previous conversion of their children, nor leave them behind. From these therefore, such a spirit might have arisen as would have quickly changed the face of the settlement, and completely defeated the grand object. As this danger did not escape the attention of the elders, their hearts were set upon the religion of the rising generation; the regulation of their families was most powerfully adapted to perpetuate the heavenly inheritance; their towns were churches, so that the young people saw little abroad to weaken the effect of the example and instructions which they enjoyed at home; and the labours of the ministers were so truly apostolic, that, honoured with the divine blessing, they were the means of rendering the second generation of Anglo-Americans as eminent for religion as their fathers. Profane persons could not endure a land where sin was hunted down with detestation, so that none but those who were delighted to dwell in the precincts of a temple chose to set their foot in New England; but of these, there

were so many, that the English government was obliged to prohibit the numerous emigrations.

It has been said, that with all this appearance of piety, these settlements were contrary to justice, and a violation of the right of property, as no charters from the British government could give the puritans a right to drive the native Indians from their homes, and take possession of their lands. In answer to this, it is affirmed that some of the lands, where the first settlements were made, had been abandoned of their inhabitants, and left desolate by the ravages of disease among the Indians; that they had, in other instances, the hearty consent of the natives who bade them welcome to their country; and Cotton Mather adds, that the English did not claim one foot of ground in the country till they had fairly purchased it from the natives, nay, so cautious were they of doing them injustice, that they made a law that some lands, which lay convenient for the Indians, should never be purchased out of their hands. They also enacted, that if any Indians should be civilized and desire to live among the English, they should have a portion of land allotted to them; and if a sufficient number should agree to live together, they should be incorporated and have a grant of lands out of those which the English had already bought of them. When William Penn afterwards imitated the independents in buying of the Indians, the lands on which he formed the colony of Quakers in Pennsylvania, it was deemed a striking instance of strict justice.

But the puritans were soon reminded that America was not heaven. They had escaped Laud and the star-chamber, but schisms and the Indians supplied their place. A Mr. Williams, on arriving at Boston,

refused to communicate with the church there, unless they would publicly declare their repentance for having held communion with the church of England while they resided in their native country. To this they objected, because they thought that, in some of the parishes in England where the minister faithfully preached the Gospel, and a sufficient number of real believers existed to celebrate the Lord's supper, there was the essence of a church, though not the form; and they considered it lawful to commune with a less perfect church till they could enjoy the fellowship of one more exactly constituted according to the mind of the Redeemer. But Mr. Williams, not being satisfied with any apology which could be made for having held communion in a corrupt antichristian hierarchy, demanded a confession of repentance for it as a sin. He afterwards occasioned much trouble to the church at Salem, and was by an ill-judged severity banished the colony; but he at length resided many years at Providence, in Rhode Island, where his peaceable and excellent conduct regained him the esteem of all good men. The antinomian tepets also were propagated, to the great annoyance of the churches, and were nourished by the zeal of a Mrs. Hutchinson, whose name has acquired an unenviable renown in the history of New England. But the war, which the Pequot Indians kindled against the new comers, was the principal bane of their colonies; for it stirred up evil passions, revenge, and cruelty, took away the colonists from their homes and the regular means of religion, and brought upon them the anger of heaven against the *spirit* of war which usually attends the practice.

The churches of New England had hitherto been

supplied with ministers who were educated in the English universities; but as that resource could not be expected to last for ever, the puritans, who knew the value of learning, were solicitous to provide a college for the education of pious young men for the ministry. In the year one thousand six hundred and thirty, only ten years after the first settlement of the colony, the general court, held at Boston, granted four hundred pounds towards erecting buildings for a college; but as this, though it was all they could afford, was found insufficient, the scheme was dropped. After some time, Mr. John Harvard, a valuable minister, who died almost as soon as he arrived in New England, bequeathed near eight hundred pounds to the college, which was then immediately commenced; for several eminent men, seeing a prospect of success, forwarded the design by large contributions. The site was at New Town, about seven or eight miles from Boston; but in honour of the intended university, the town now took the name of Cambridge; and to perpetuate the memory of its principal benefactor, the seminary was called Harvard College\*. Many liberal men, both in America and among the English dissenters, contributed to the increase and support of the important institution, making presents of philosophical apparatus and books; but the principal benefactor was the celebrated Theophilus Gale, author of the Court of the Gentiles, who left to the college his valuable library, as he bequeathed also his whole estate for the education of poor scholars, to be managed by his non-conforming brethren. While the buildings were erecting, scholars were provided, and a teacher was engaged; but the first professor,

\* Cotton Mather, book iv. p. 128.

whose name was Eaton, kept, says Mather, the school of Tyrannus, so that he was dismissed for his cruelties to the scholars. The youths, when received into the college, were expected to make good Latin, and to understand the rudiments of the Greek language. The domestic devotions of the house were constantly attended by the students, one of whom read a chapter from the Hebrew of the Old Testament into Greek, every morning; and from the English of the New Testament into Greek, in the evening. At the commencement, the candidates for the baccalaureate delivered orations, not only in the Latin, but also frequently in Greek, and even in Hebrew<sup>1</sup>. The famous Comenius was invited to become president of the college, but the Swedish ambassador prevailed on him to direct his steps towards Sweden. A printing press was annexed to the college, to print tracts of a religious nature, and one of the largest works which issued from this university press, was a new version of the psalms, which was undertaken in order to supersede the doggrel rhimes of Sternhold and Hopkins.

But as it is not possible for genuine and eminent religion to exist amidst an atmosphere of darkness and pollution, without attempting to diffuse the illuminating and sanctifying beams of the Gospel, these first settlers in New England soon began to turn their benevolent attention to the Indian nations, by whom they were surrounded. It is said that they acknowledged a good deity, whom they called Kiehton, though they seldom worshipped him, because they believed he would not hurt them; but the evil being, or devil, Hobomacko, they adored on every alarm. Their priests were a sort of conjurors, who pretended

<sup>1</sup> Cotton Mather, book iv. p. 121.

to converse with invisible spirits, and to have power to heal the sick, which was almost the whole of their functions; for, as they had no temples, they had no stated devotions, nor any instruction in moral or religious duties. The first missionary who went among them, was Mr. Eliot, who acquired so deservedly the title of apostle to the Indians, that he will be mentioned among the eminent men whom New England has produced. Mr. Mayhew also attempted the same godlike work in Martha's Vineyard. This good man was son to one of the governors of the country, and having devoted himself to the ministry of the Gospel, he laboured among the Indians with such successful zeal, that the innumerable hardships and privations he endured, were recompensed by beholding the heathens flock to him in whole families. Two hundred and eighty adult Indians, and eight powows, or conjuror priests, had embraced the Christian faith when Mr. Mayhew was called away from his severe, but honourable labours, to the rewards of those who turn many to righteousness. His death afflicted the Indians with the keenest regrets, so that for a long time after, they could not hear his name without tears.

To carry on this noble design the long parliament passed an act in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-nine, for encouraging the propagation of the Gospel in New England, by which a corporation was erected and empowered to raise money for the cause. In virtue of this act, a collection was made in all the parishes in England, which enabled the society to purchase a landed estate, to the amount of between six and seven hundred pounds per annum. The first president of the corporation was judge Steele, and the

first treasurer Mr. Henry Ashurst. But at the restoration, the person of whom the estate was purchased, being a Roman catholic, reclaimed it; so that the society was induced to apply for a new charter, which, through the interest of Mr. Baxter and Mr. Ashurst, with chancellor Hide, it obtained, and by a suit of law recovered the estate. Robert Boyle, esq. was the first governor of the new company, which soon maintained sixteen missionaries, some of whom preached to the heathens in their own tongue.

The independent churches held, at Cambridge, in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-eight, a synod, to consult concerning the confession of faith, which the assembly of divines at Westminster had composed. After reading it over carefully, article by article, they passed unanimously the following vote: "the synod having perused and considered with much gladness of heart the confession of faith published by the late reverend assembly in England, do judge it to be very holy, orthodox, and judicious, in matters of faith; and do freely consent to the substance thereof, and recommend it to the churches." They limit their approbation to matters of faith; for, as the synod was composed of independents, they could not approve of those regulations for church government and discipline, which were laid down by an assembly of presbyterian divines. The synod seized, however, this opportunity to consider of a platform of discipline for their own churches, and appointed three ministers, Messrs. John Cotton, Richard Mather, and Ralph Patridge, to draw each of them from the Scriptures a model of church government, from all which the synod afterwards composed one, in which the churches generally acquiesced. It

must not, however, be supposed, that an independent synod pretended, like the courts of the same name among the presbyterians, or episcopalians, to legislate authoritatively for the churches; for they professed only to pronounce their opinion on important points, and to give their advice. The first synod which was held, on account of Mrs. Hutchinson's opinions, after mentioning the sentiments which they judged erroneous, instead of hurling anathemas on those who held them, simply said, this we judge to be contrary to a certain text of Scripture, which was annexed to the article.

As the baptists in England now began to separate from the independents, to form churches of their own, the same distinctions prevailed in America. Those baptists who were in communion with the congregational churches, offended the ministers by leaving the public worship when children were baptized; which kindled evil tempers, and drew harsh censures from the preachers; who thus contributed to drive the two parties far from each other in affection, as well as in sentiment. But when baptist churches were formed, the magistrates interfered, and passed severe laws, in which they inflicted civil penalties for dissenting from the religion of the country. When they imagined this disgraceful dereliction of the principles of independents had completely succeeded; they were righteously punished by the troubles which they endured from the quakers, who were now rising into notice. The first of this denomination who came into New England, were two women, whom the magistrates first imprisoned, and then sent out of the country, by the same ship in which they had arrived from Barbadoes. When the quakers were



prohibited by beat of drum from entering the jurisdiction of the state, one Nicholas, wisely and faithfully warned them against incurring the guilt of persecution; but he was punished for his friendly fidelity. Cotton Mather says, "a great clamour has been raised against New England for the persecution of the quakers, and if any man will appear in its vindication, let him, I will not. I am verily persuaded, these miserable quakers, would in a little time (as we have now seen) have come to nothing, if the magistrate had not inflicted any civil penalty on them." The behaviour of the quakers was such as to justify the interference of the civil authority; but the conduct of the magistrates in proceeding to execute the sentence of death, was, after all, inexcusable. Yet when men by their religion disturb the peace of society, they must not wonder if the execution of the laws mark the hatred of the magistrate for their religious sentiments. It is also affirmed, that the followers of George Keith, were by the quakers themselves punished, for causes not dissimilar, though far inferior to those which drew upon the quakers the vengeance of the independents. An article composed by one of Keith's followers, has these remarks, "since the English in New England hanged their countrymen for religion, is thirty-six years; but it is only three years since, at Philadelphia, where quakers ruled, some did little less, by taking away goods, and imprisoning some and condemning others, without trial, for religious dissent<sup>m</sup>."

The restoration of monarchy and episcopacy in England, altered the circumstances of New England. Out of two thousand ministers, who were deprived

<sup>m</sup> Cotton Mather, book vii. p. 24.

of their opportunities of usefulness in England, it may be supposed that some would turn their attention to America, where their sentiments were dominant. Fourteen are mentioned as having entered upon the fields which were opened to them in the new world, whither more would have followed, had they not been kept in continual expectation either of comprehension within the establishment, or of a toleration for the separate congregations. Mather deeply laments that New England was deprived of the honour and advantage which they hoped to derive from the labours of Dr. John Owen, who had accepted of their invitation and taken his passage in a ship, but the changing circumstances of the times having opened to him a field of labour in England, he declined their pressing intreaties. Charles the second connived at the puritanism of America, while he was persecuting the nonconformists in England, till towards the close of his reign ; when having deprived the city of London of its charter, he issued a quo warranto to compell the colonies to give up the charters by which they held their civil rights and religious liberties. But death forbade him to execute whatever purposes of tyranny or persecution he may have formed. When, on the accession of James, they groaned under the arbitrary conduct of his governors, especially of sir Edmund Andross, who outran both his predecessors, and his tyrannical master, in oppressive conduct, the revolution once more delivered the colonies from the iron yoke. The new charter which king William granted, was not in some points satisfactory, but the governor, whom he allowed them to nominate for themselves, was sir William Phipps, of whom we read the most excellent accounts<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>a</sup> Mather, book ii.

The American churches now appear to have declined from their primitive glory; for the fathers whom death had swept away, were not always succeeded by heirs to their faith and zeal; so that the ministers publicly complained that zeal for religion had yielded to the cares of the world, that the Sabbath and the name of God were profaned, that the worship of God was neglected in many families, and that the ministry of the Gospel was seldom successful in the conversion of sinners to God. The causes of this decline were the bloody wars with the Indians, which had driven away the mild and merciful spirit of Jesus Christ; the wide extension of the new settlements, by which the people were scattered and deprived of the advantages of Christian communion and worship; the rapid increase of property, which kindled pride and fed covetousness, so inimical to true religion; and, above all, the contentions which prevailed concerning the admission of members, and the conditions of infant baptism. All the first planters of the churches of New England, demanded satisfactory evidence of true repentance and faith before they received any one into the communion of the church, and in baptism required that one of the parents at least should be in full communion. Not having, however, learned to distinguish between the church and the world, they did not stop here, but passed a law, that "for the time to come, no man should be admitted to the freedom of this body politic, but such as are members of some of the churches within the limits of the same." One would think that the genius of madness and discord dictated this resolution, which carries in it all the vilest leaven of an exclusive establishment. That such a

law should be long observed was impossible; for in a few years, when the religious state of the colonies declined, it cut off multitudes not only from civil offices, but from the rights of freemen. There was no other way of retaining the absurd and iniquitous regulation but by doing violence to the church of Christ, for as its members were to be the only free citizens of the state, all who wished to become free determined to be members of the church. Hence, instead of abolishing the law dictated by their own policy, or rather by their own folly and carnality, they fell upon the regulations of infinite wisdom, and tampered with the sacred body of Jesus Christ. A plan was proposed, that persons moral in life, without being examined as to renovation of heart, should publicly covenant to obey the Gospel, and by thus entering into what is called the half-way covenant, should be considered as members of the church, and should have their children baptized, though they did not approach the Lord's table. This was approved by a synod, for the ministers more generally approved it than the brethren of the churches; though some eminent pastors expressed their just disapprobation of the mischievous measure; and in Connecticut, where it originated, not one church embraced it before the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-six. One circumstance facilitated its reception. The churches had contended, according to the principles of independents, that they possessed the sole right of electing the minister, but as the other inhabitants of the town were taxed for his support, they naturally claimed a right to vote at his election, and thus approved of a regulation which gave them the rights of members of the church. The violation of the

essential principles of the independents and the evident hostility to the principles of true religion, which appear in these regulations fill us with astonishment, which increases when we reflect that some most excellent men and ministers were the avowed patrons of measures which strike at the vitals of all pure Christian communion, and all just principles of civil liberty.

The jealous-opposition which ought to be given to every attempt at political coalition with Christian communion, is taught by the continuance of the evil effects, after the absurd law in which the mischief originated, was either repealed or fell into desuetude, which was the case before the revolution. Parents who hoped to confer benefits on their children by the rite of baptism, though they rejected Christ themselves, and ministers who were pleased to see the church apparently enlarged, and hoped that some good effects might be produced on those who entered into external covenant, conspired to continue the anomalous regulations which had been unhappily introduced. In the year one thousand seven hundred Mr. Stoddard, minister of Northampton, inferred, with apparent justness, that those who could thus convey baptism to their children, had themselves a right to the Lord's supper; which led him on to another conclusion, that the Lord's supper was a converting ordinance, and that a moral life, not a change of heart, was essential to admission at the sacred feast. Acting on this plan, he contended for it with zeal, and his influence among the churches, induced many to accompany him in this retrograde departure from the pure communion of the first churches. Thus the essence of the church, which consists in the separation of a

people from the world, was attacked, discipline could no longer be maintained among such a heterogeneous mass of discordant materials, and men who were living in their sins were soothed by the enjoyment of all the distinctive privileges of Christians, in partaking of which they fancied they were doing their duty.

Such innovations, where there was any remaining knowledge or life of religion, could not fail to provoke a controversy. Dr. Increase Mather accordingly opposed Mr. Stoddard with great strength of argument. He contended that unregenerate men could not be fit members of the churches of Christ, which are described as consisting of men called to be saints; that if those who are not real Christians are to be admitted to the supper, because it is a converting ordinance, the most profane ought not to be prohibited. To which Mr. Stoddard replied chiefly by appeals to the Jewish church and covenant. The venerable character of the good man, however, gave such vogue to his sentiments, that the churches in Massachusetts were generally corrupted; and where the new practice was not openly adopted, it so far influenced the conduct of the churches, that the discipline became lax, and the communion impure.

After this gross departure from the vital principles of the original independents, it will excite no surprise to learn that, in the year one thousand seven hundred and five, a plan was proposed in Massachusetts, for changing the congregational mode of church government into the presbyterian. John Wise, of Ipswich, keenly opposed it, in a work entitled, "the Church's Quarrel espoused," and the scheme was for a time abandoned, but revived again in the year one thou-

sand seven hundred and five, when it was adopted in what was called the saybrook platform. The articles of discipline then agreed upon resolved the churches into several distinct associations or councils, composed of the ministers and messengers within a convenient district, whose decision in all controversies was to be final. If any pastor refused to submit, the sentence of non-communication was to be pronounced against him, by which he was cut off from the fellowship of the other churches. This platform was soon generally embraced throughout Connecticut. But the presbyterianism which was thus introduced, was so opposed by the churches in their individual practice that it became nugatory. The congregational churches were much the more numerous, and the presbyterians, having no civil establishment, could not enforce their jurisdiction over those who did not choose to obey. The whole affair, however, strongly marks the decay of pure communion in the churches, and the attempt to supply its place by composition with the world, and an increase of priestly domination.

The high tone of religion, which had prevailed in New England, was also immensely injured by what may now be thought a ludicrous cause. The supposed prevalence of witchcraft filled the country with terror. It originated in Salem village, and was principally confined to the county of Essex, in Massachusetts. Nineteen unhappy victims were in a few months executed for being witches. The evidence now appears so unsatisfactory, even upon the supposition of the reality of that species of crime, that we are astonished at the credulity and rashness which could take away the life of a fellow-creature on such grounds. But

some of the accused contributed to the destruction of others, by making a false confession in hopes of escaping, and one of the judges, as well as some jurors, acknowledged afterwards their error and delusion. Dr. Cotton Mather, by his ardent imagination, was betrayed into much credulity, in this, as well as in some other instances. Religion, however, suffered in consequence of the mania, for the bitterest passions were excited by the different views which men formed of those who were accused and condemned, as well as of the whole subject ; many were agitated by superstitious fears, which attributed every ridiculous disaster to witches and devils ; while others, despising the folly of ascribing every thing to the devil under the shape of a negro, or a black cat, were by an easy transition to the opposite extreme, induced to question the doctrine of Scripture concerning the existence and agency of the fallen spirit. Those, who are accustomed to deride the puritans as fanatics, will perhaps triumph in this deplorable folly as an evidence of the justice of their censures. But let us consider the æra of this delusion, and reflect that the distance of the colonies from the original focus of knowledge threw them half a century behind the mother country in point of philosophical culture ; then let it be remembered, that the fathers of the church of England, the bishops and archbishops, upon their knees, pronounced king James a very Solomon for wisdom, and that this Solomon wrote a book to teach his subjects the reality of witchcraft, and the duty of proceeding against the professors of this black art, with all the severity of the law ; it will not then appear wonderful, that simple presbyters and plebeians should so far yield to the superior sanctity of apos-



tolie bishops and the profound wisdom of a Solomon, who understood all the secrets of nature, grace and sin, as to hang crooked old women for witches<sup>o</sup>.

From these various causes, however, religion decayed, and the ministers partook of the degeneracy. Dr. Increase Mather, in a work entitled, "the Glory departing from New England," says, "look into the pulpit, and see if there is such a glory there, as once there was. New England has had teachers eminent for learning, and no less eminent for holiness and all ministerial accomplishments." "When will Boston see a Cotton, and a Norton again? When will New England see a Hooker, a Shepard, a Mitchell, not to mention others? There are ministers who are not like their predecessors, nor principled, nor spirited as they were. The providence of God is threatening to pull down the wall, which has been a defence to these churches." Such language indicates the decay of godliness. The last sentence probably refers to the principle propagated by Mr. Stoddard, and to the effect which it unhappily produced.

Another<sup>p</sup>, in a sermon before the general court, says, "Whether we have not forgotten the errand on which we left our native land and come into this wilderness deserves serious enquiry. We professed to regard only the worship of God in its purity, and the glory of religion, and what love for the Word and ways of God was then displayed; what purity of conduct, what glory of religion in families! But who is there that has seen the former lustre of these churches, and

<sup>o</sup> It may also be observed, that even the wise and benevolent judge Hale condemned to death two women at Norwich for the supposed crime of witchcraft.

<sup>p</sup> Mr. Samuel Danforth, of Roxbury.

beholds their present state; is it not as nothing in your eyes." In an exhortation to pray for the rising generation, Dr. Increase Mather declares, "the body of the rising generation, is a poor, perishing, unconverted race.

"I wish," says this venerable pastor, "I were no other than Horace's old man, *laudator temporis acti*, when I complain that the very interest of New England seems to be changed from a religious to a worldly one. There was a famous man who preached seventy years ago before one of the greatest assemblies, and he told them, I have lived in a country seven years, and all that time I never heard one profane oath, and never saw a man drunk in that land. Where was that land? It was New England. But, oh degenerate New England! how are these sins become common in thee!"

To consider of this evil, and to devise means of recovery, what was called a reforming synod was convoked, and after many days of devotion, such methods were adopted as, under the divine blessing, produced a very delightful change. A new effusion of the Spirit was granted to the churches, and the most cheering accounts are given of the revival of religion. When the establishment of the societies for reformation was known in America, Mr. Samuel Danforth, minister of Taunton, and the most zealous Christians in Boston, established in those towns similar meetings which were crowned with unexpected success. Mr. Danforth writes, in the year one thousand seven hundred and four, "we are much encouraged by an unusual and amazing impression made by the Spirit of God on all sorts among us, especially among the young. It is almost incredible, how many visit me

with accounts of the extreme distress of mind they are brought into on account of their spiritual condition. The young men, instead of their merry-meetings are forming themselves into regular meetings for prayer and religious exercises. Some awful deaths and amazing providences have concurred with the preaching of the Word to produce this good effect, and the profanest among us seem startled at the sudden change in the rising generation. Our family meetings are more and more frequented, and two more are setting up at two remote corners of our large town where we despaired of seeing any. Our last meeting of the society, held yesterday, had nothing to do but to express our mutual joy that the disorderly concourse of youth is now over. In our assembling in the church we renewed our covenant for reformation. The whole was transacted with such gravity, and tears of devout affection, as would move a heart of stone: parents weeping for joy to see their children give their names to Christ. We have many now proposed for communion. Religion flourishes to amazement, so that I have scarce time for any thing, even studying sermons as I used to do; but I find God can bless the kind of preparations for which I have time. Mr. Stoddard, the maternal grandfather of the great Jonathan Edwards, had also, as he said, five harvests, in which more was done for the good of religion in some months, than in as many years of ordinary usefulness. The greatest revivals took place during this period of which we now write. It was also an auspicious circumstance, that about the same time was born, and impressed with evangelical truth, that great light of the earth, president Edwards, whose name will again delight

us when contemplating a future revival of religion in America.

It may be gratifying to our readers to see a statement of the number of churches in British America, which was made in the beginning of the eighteenth century, and conveys an accurate view of the state of the different denominations in the year one thousand seven hundred. There were a hundred and fifty churches in New England, thirty of which were Indian churches, with Indian preachers. These afterwards declined by intermixture with the whites, by disease, and by the use of ardent spirits.

	Souls.	Were episcopalians.	Episcopal communicants.
In Massachusetts there were	80,000	of whom only 600	and 120
Rhode Island - - - -	10,000	- - - - -	150 30
Connecticut - - - -	30,000	- - - - -	150 35
New York - - - -	30,000	- - - - -	1200 400
New Jersey - - - -	15,000	- - - - -	600 250
Pennsylvania - - - -	20,000	- - - - -	700 250
Virginia - - - -	40,000	Here are 40 parishes and 20 clergy.	
North Carolina - - -	5,000	No minister nor church of any kind.	
South Carolina - - -	7,000	No episcopal minister, but a few dissenting ministers.	

Hence it appears, that those who professed to belong to the church of England were few in comparison with the other denominations, except in Virginia, and there but half the parishes had ministers. Indeed the episcopalians could scarcely support their church, till they received aid from two sources. Mr. James Blair, an episcopal minister in Scotland, discouraged with the state of things in that country, towards the latter end of Charles the second's reign went to Virginia, where he laboured with exemplary diligence; and at length, perceiving how destitute they were of ministers and education, he formed a plan for estab-

lishing a college. After soliciting private subscriptions, he came over to England, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-three, where queen Mary warmly patronized the scheme, so that a patent was passed for erecting and endowing William and Mary college, of which Mr. Blair was president fifty years. The society for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts, which was established in the year one thousand seven hundred and one, supplied also some of the southern colonies with ministers, distributed books, and laboured in other ways to support an episcopal church in America.

One eminent labourer in Christ's vineyard demands distinguished notice in a review of the religious state of America. Mr. John Elliot was born in England, in what town his biographer, Dr. Cotton Mather, could not learn, but it must have been about the year one thousand six hundred and four. His parents were pious, of which he writes, "I see it was the great favour of God to me, to season my first times with the fear of God." He was early called to the saving knowledge of Christ by the ministry of Mr. Thomas Hooker, who afterwards went to America, where he ended his days. Mr. Elliot's education at the university being thus sanctified to the service of God, he first taught a school; but as he wished to labour in the ministry, and was prevented by the Laudean faction at home, he joined those who went to plant congregational churches in America. He arrived at Boston, towards the close of the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-one, and was invited by the church there to become their pastor; but as he had promised some friends in England that if they came over he would be their minister, he declined

this invitation and took the charge of those who shortly after arrived, and formed the town of Roxbury. He had left behind him, says Mather, a virtuous young gentlewoman, whom he had courted, who coming over next year, they were married in October, of the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-two. This wife of his youth was the staff of his old age, for she died but four years before him, when in the presence of a vast concourse, at her funeral, he said, "here lies my dear, faithful, pious, prudent, prayerful wife; I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me." He had six children by her, three of whom died before their father. His son John inherited his father's spirit, for he was eminently accomplished for the divine service, an acute, zealous, lively preacher; and devoted to the conversion of the heathen as well as of the English<sup>1</sup>. When he died his good old parent said, "I have six children, and I bless God for his grace that they are all either in Christ or with Christ, and my mind is at rest concerning them." When one asked him how he could bear the deaths of such excellent sons, who were devoted to the ministry, he replied, "I designed they should serve God on earth; but if he chose they should serve him in heaven, I have nothing to say against him." His Benjamin, says Mather, was made the son of his right hand by the invitation of the church at Roxbury, which placed him in the same pulpit as his father. But it was said; as in another case, the father had laid up in a better world a rich inheritance for his children, and he sent a son before to take possession.

<sup>1</sup> On his death-bed this son of Elliot's said, "my dear friends, a dark day is coming on New England, my counsel is, get an interest in the Lord Jesus Christ; and it will carry you to the world's end:"

Mr. Elliot was an israelite indeed, a prince victorious in prayer, which tinged his conversation with the marks of his converse with God. His love of the Bible and the Sabbath, his charity and mildness were most exemplary. He had one important quality of a missionary, great abstemiousness; for his constant drink was water. In his declining years he advised the church to choose an assistant, offering to resign back his salary to the Lord Jesus Christ, as he expressed it; but they handsomely told him they should esteem his presence worth a salary.

His acquaintance with the original languages of the Scriptures being very extensive, he, like most others who excell in Hebrew, was an enthusiast for it, wishing that some pious scholar would form an universal language from this mother of tongues. He studied his sermons with great care, and might say like Paul, "we preach Christ crucified." He was exceedingly fond of children, and warmly patronized schools, and every method of training up the rising generation for God. The congregational or independent church government he valued so highly, that he thought it was Christ's grand boon to his people in America, and affirmed, that no approved Christian writer, for the space of two hundred years mentioned any other kind of church. He contended earnestly for what Cotton Mather says Justin Martyr in the second century affirms to have been the custom of the churches in his time, to examine those they received not only concerning their creed, but their evidence of a work of grace upon their souls. But, like Dr. Owen, another great independent, he thought the churches ought to convoke synods for mutual consultation. In support of this view he published a

book, entitled, "the divine Management of Gospel Churches, by the ordinance of Councils constituted according to Scripture, which may be the means of uniting those two holy and eminent parties the presbyterians and independents."

But the brightest ray which adorned the brow of Elliot was his missionary zeal for the conversion of the Indians. His American biographer says, "there were twenty nations of Indians which fell under the influence of our three united colonies. They were in the most wretched state. Not having metals, they used stones for cutting, and called an European, a knife man. They had no letters nor science, though they called Charles' wain, the bear. They supposed every thing had a god in it, and spake of the sun-god, the moon-god, but especially the fire-god. Though they believed in an immortal soul, which was to be rewarded or punished in a future state, of the resurrection they used to say, "I shall never believe it." Elliot had a notion that they were the posterity of the dispersed Israelites; for he observed many Jewish customs concerning their women, their computation of time by nights and moons, their rights of sepulture and abhorrence of swine. He willingly cherished this opinion, because he saw from the Scriptures, that the Jews would be converted to Christ. But finding it difficult to account for the first peopling of the western hemisphere, many in New England attributed it to the aid of the devil, who thought, by removing a part of the human race thither, they would be placed out of the reach of the Gospel. Elliot was much impressed with the seal of the Massachusetts colony, which represents an Indian with a label, saying, "come over and help us;" for he was astonished at those who subscribe the articles of the



church of England, and yet, profess to believe that the heathen might be saved without the knowledge of Christ. The ministers around him, delighted with his intentions, supplied his church at Roxbury, while he made every fortnight a missionary tour. He hired an Indian to teach him their language, and with great skill and labour, he reduced it into order, and composed a grammar which he published. The difficulties must have been great, for they use a world of words, and some of them more than sesquipedalian. One word, which occurs in Mark i. 40, is wuttappesit-tukquasunnook weptunkquot.

In the year one thousand six hundred and forty-six, he went, with three others, to an assembly of Indians convened at his request. After a solemn prayer, he spoke to them about a quarter of an hour on the principal articles of the Christian religion, encouraging them to ask him questions, which they frequently did in a philosophical spirit, declaring that they understood all he said. His heart was melted to see the floods of tears which they shed at his first preaching to them. He was anxious to meet with their powows, or priests, and on asking one of them, who made the world, God, or Chapien the devil; the man replied, God; then why, said Elliot, do you worship the devil; to which the priest could give no answer. He endured immense fatigue in travelling to them, for he says in a letter, "I have not been dry night nor day, from the third day of the week to the sixth; but in my travels at night, I pull off my boots and wring my stockings, and on with them again, and so continue." He set up schools among the Indians, many of whom not only learned to read, but arrived at eminence in literature, and took degrees in the American colleges. With immense labour he tran-

slated the Scriptures into their tongue. He wrote this Indian Bible, like Holland's Plutarch, with one pen, and it was the only Bible printed at Cambridge, in America. He printed primers and grammars, the Practice of Piety, Baxter's Call, and other books in the Indian language; and might well remark, when he finished his grammar, "prayers and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do any thing."

Those, who became what were called praying Indians, wished to abandon their erratic life. The first town they formed was called Natick, where they chose, according to the eighteenth chapter of Exodus, rulers of hundreds, fifties, and tens; for Elliot thought that all governments would be shaken to bring them to the pattern of the Scriptures. They abandoned polygamy, and severely prohibited fornication, drunkenness, and other sins. They were formed into a church, which was examined with more than usual strictness by Christians of other churches, that they might be satisfied the Indian church was such as they could acknowledge. Richard Mather says, "there is so much of the work of God among them, that it is a sin to make light of it. To hear Indians praying to Jehovah through the mediation of Jesus Christ, confessing their sins with floods of tears!"

The Sachems, or princes, afraid of losing their hold on the people, resisted Elliot with threats, but he told them he should persevere in the Lord's work though all the powers of earth and hell opposed. One of the enraged warriors, in their symbolic style, plucked off a button from the coat of the preacher, telling him he cared for the Gospel as much as for that button.

Other labourers were roused to imitate this noble pattern, and Mr. Richard Bourn preached with so much success to the Indians at Massippang, that Mr.

Elliot, accompanied by the governor, and several magistrates and ministers of Plymouth colony, heard several of them in a vast assembly of Indians profess their knowledge of Christ, their belief of the Gospel, and experience of regeneration. Other churches were formed, and Indian pastors set over them. Elliot lived to see twenty-four of these copper-coloured preachers, of whom the most eminent was called Hiacomés, a man who displayed the courage of a martyr. Some curious specimens are given of Indian theology and preaching, which do honour to their natural faculties and religious attainments.

The American Peter, as Mather styles him, who employed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, the preaching of the Gospel, to open the door of faith to the Indians, drawing near ninety, begged his church to choose a successor, to whom he transferred his robes of office with great humility. He attempted the instruction of the negroes, when he modestly thought his powers too much decayed to teach men of superior attainments, and at length said, "I wonder for what our Lord Jesus continues me here, where I can no longer serve him." With his last breath he prayed for the conversion of the Indians, "Lord, revive and prosper that work, and grant that it may live when I am dead." Adverting to his long life, he pleasantly said, "he was afraid his old friends Cotton of Boston, and Mather of Dorchester, finding him tarry so long behind them, would fear he had gone the wrong way." He used to say he was going to heaven, and should carry much good news with him, he should tell the founders of the New England churches, that they were going on well, and increasing. He died with these good tidings in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety.

## SECTION V.

STATE OF RELIGION BEYOND THE BRITISH  
EMPIRE.

As the hero of the British revolution held also the reins of government in Holland, our first attention is directed thither. The liberty which that country enjoyed, from the time it shook off the yoke of Rome and Spain, rendered it a favourable soil for religion; and as the people were the principal authors of their reformation, they displayed all the lively interest in the cause which never fails to produce a good effect. William saw many eminent servants of God in his native country, where the doctrines of the Gospel were preached with great purity, and defended by all the learning and talents of the orthodox; while the arminians, with Limborch at their head, not only sharpened the weapons of the calvinists, but by their own labours placed many important truths in a clearer light. Among the divines of the dominant church, no name was so deservedly celebrated as that of Herman Witsius, or De Wit. His works in six quarto volumes are not indeed distinguished by original genius, but they contain treasures of learning and various reading, arranged with an admirable portion of the *lucidus ardo*, combining much sound sense with some peurile conceits, but conveying in elegant persuasive Latin the emotions of a heart warmly devoted to the glory of the Redeemer. The late Mr. Hervey, who sometimes praises like one who was

not well read in the best theological writers, pronounces an extravagant eulogy on "the Economy of the Covenants;" but his piece on the Lord's prayer is a fine specimen of Latin preaching, and his *Egyptiaca* pours forth stores of recondite learning on an interesting theme. As Witsius was professor of divinity in the universities of Franeker, Utrecht, and Leyden, the youths who passed from before his chair to ascend the pulpit, must have had every advantage for becoming able ministers of Jesus Christ. When appealed to on the controversy concerning Dr. Crisp's works, Witsius gave his judgment in some truly "peaceful animadversions," which should have brought the disputants to better temper; and while his orthodoxy was never suspected by the opposite party, he gave a most honourable testimony to the sentiments of Dr. Williams and his friends. This very useful and pious divine died in the year one thousand seven hundred and eight, at the advanced age of eighty-two.

About this time the French protestants, who fled from the scourge of Louis the fourteenth, took refuge in Holland, on account of the favourable vicinity of that country. Among them the celebrated model of pulpit eloquence, Saurin, holds a distinguished place. His preaching attracted not only the multitude, but princes and generals, to whom he appealed in behalf of the religion and liberties which the French king attempted to extinguish, with so much effect, that it was said, the arms which gained the battles of Malplaquet and Hotchtet were forged in the chapel of Saurin. At the same time the sceptical Bayle was defending the liberties of the protestants by the eloquence, and sapping all religion by the insidious-

ness of his pen, so that while he maintained their credit in the republic of letters, it is probable the pious men would say, "save us from our defenders."

In the North of Europe, protestants were not in the most flourishing state. The semi-madman of war-like memory, Charles the twelfth of Sweden, was at this time astonishing his kingdom and all Europe with his pranks. Bishop Burnet says, "he seemed to have a real sense of religion;" but he appears to us a savage warrior, as far from the religion of the Bible, as the character of Mars from that of Jesus. Voltaire makes an impotent attempt to press him into the ranks of the infidels, who are welcome to the honour of their disciple. Charles, however, passed for a zealous patron of protestantism, for as he loved stern justice, and delighted to play the king, on learning that the protestants in Silesia had been deprived of the use of their churches, secured to them by the treaty of Munster, of which the crown of Sweden was guarantee, he applied to the court of Austria in such a tone that, in spite of all its pride and bigotry, it was compelled to submit to his demands. He also patronised the protestant interest in Swisserland, and interceded with the king of France for the liberation of some hundreds of protestants, who were confined to the galleys by that intolerant coxcomb.

Denmark presents to us a noble display of Christian benevolence and zeal, in the year one thousand seven hundred and five, when one of the chaplains of Frederick the fourth solicited the king to establish a mission in the East Indies, at the Danish settlement of Tranquebar. Whether they could not find suitable

men in their own country does not appear ; but they applied to the university at Halle, in Germany, which supplied them with two apostolic men, Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Henry Plutsch, who embarked at Copenhagen, November the twenty-ninth, in the year one thousand seven hundred and five, and landed at Tranquebar in the July of the following year. From the character of the men selected for the work, and the spirit of their labours, we may form favourable conclusions concerning the religion of the Danes, who superintended the mission at home, who must have been amply compensated by the cheering tidings which they received.

Germany, the birth-place of the reformation, still shone pre-eminent among the Christian nations. When the ancient splendour of the Lutheran church was obscured, after the death of its founder and his immediate successors, so that in many places the reformed needed a second reformation, it pleased the gracious Head of the church to revive them again. But as in England the denomination of puritan was given to dissenters for a brand of disgrace by those who themselves professed to pray for purity of heart and life, so in Germany the advocates of genuine Christianity were branded, or rather honoured, with the name of pietists. This term, however, did not designate any new communion, but was applied, as the term methodist frequently is in England, to signify a party within the bosom of the establishment, who differ from the rest only by really believing what all professed, and acting upon their own principles with eminent piety and distinguished zeal.

This revival originated, about a hundred years' after Luther, when Dr. Gerhard, professor of divinity at Jena, and John Arndt, superintendant of the churches of Lunenburgh, sought to revive the dying flame of religion among the followers of the Augustan confession; not however excluding other Christians. Arndt wrote with this design, his "True Christianity," which has been published in several languages; and his "Garden of Paradise." By these treatises he called many to the knowledge of Christ, but drew upon himself the animadversions of those who love things as they are, and hate things as they ought to be, especially among the clergy, some of whose names might be mentioned; but justice says, let them rot, while mercy assents to the sentence as most for their credit. A posthumous treatise of Theophilus Grosgebauer proved a mighty blessing to Germany, especially as it opened the eyes of the celebrated Dr. Spener, whose conferences with his neighbour, Dr. Raith, at Tubingen, in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty-two, were the means of kindling a vital flame in Germany. One of their coadjutors having declared from the pulpit the wretched state of the church, was called to account for saying, "our modern Christians and superficial pretenders to religion have four dumb idols which they worship. 1, the pulpit; 2, the font; 3, the altar; 4, the confession stool." Dr. Spener published a book entitled, *Pia Desideria*, or Pious Wishes, which produced many of those good things for which he sighed, particularly in bringing forth from forgetfulness and neglect, many excellent books, the works of the first reformers, who now began to live and preach again. He established meetings for prayer

\* Preface to *Pietas Hallensis*.



and religious conversation at his own house, where he committed the mortal sin of suffering the stupid unconsecrated laity to exercise their religious gifts.

But at Leipsic some masters of arts in the university established a meeting on the Lord's day evening, which they called *collegium philo-biblicum*, because their object was, to read and study the Scriptures for their mutual edification. Their meetings soon became numerous and public, and were joined by the celebrated Franck, who set up lectures on the books of Scriptures; which not only diffused the knowledge of the sacred Writings, but produced the most beneficial change on the hearts and lives of many. The students in divinity now abandoned the affectation of a theatrical oratory, formerly their sole study, and became lovers of the Scriptures to such a degree, that the booksellers could not supply the unprecedented demand for Greek Testaments.

Jealousy, detraction, and persecution, the sure attendants of all revivals of religion, pursued these good men. A nick-name was invented, and Dr. Spener was called the patriarch of the pietists. Germany was filled with outcries against the new sect, as it was called, while the press teemed with apologies and anti-apologies, which fed the flames of controversy. The city of Erfurt was a principal nursery for the pietists, whose spirit and principles were diffused in Lunenburgh, Halberstadt, Wolfenbuttel, Gotha, and other parts of Germany. At length the magistrates were unhappily excited to interfere; and though they pronounced the pietists free from errors in doctrine or immoral conduct, they forbade them to continue their colleges for the study of the Scriptures and the promotion of vital godliness; and, in some instances,

banished the friends of the revival, which, however, only served to scatter the heavenly seed over a wider field.

In Prussia, where Lutheranism and Calvinism prevailed, and twenty thousand French protestants had taken refuge, pietism inspired them all with an improved taste and spirit. Frederick of Prussia, then elector of Brandenburg, hearing of the fame of Dr. Spener, invited him to accept the superintendancy of some of the Lutheran churches in his dominions. Here he founded a new university, which was situated at Halle, in Saxony, but belonged to the house of Brandenburg. He brought thither many of his old associates in pietism, who now diffused their excellent spirit throughout Prussia. Having thus become the instrument of kindling new life in more than one country, and laid the foundation of an institution which long perpetuated the blessing, he died in the bosom of peace and blessedness in the year one thousand seven hundred and five.

Dr. Breithaupt was chosen professor of divinity, and Franck professor of the oriental languages, and pastor of Glaucha, near Halle; so that this place was consecrated to pietism. Those who fled from the persecutions raised against the new sect in Germany, came to Brandenburg, which roused the old clergy to fierce opposition; and so many evil reports were spread, that the king was induced to form a commission of inquiry, which honourably acquitted the accused. The king now more decidedly protected the pietists, and confirmed the new institutions at Halle, with many privileges. Such was the efficacy of these efforts, that we are informed, vast editions of the Bible have been printed, and either given away, or sold at

small prices. Catechetical lectures, on a new and instructive method, were generally instituted ; private meetings of Christians for mutual edification generally established ; the instruction of youth was much improved, and attended with singular diligence ; pious tutors were provided for the families of the gentry ; public schools were formed for the religious education of genteel youth of both sexes, by which means the rising generation were visibly improved ; many hymns for devotion were composed and introduced into churches ; pious books were re-published in the vulgar tongue ; many new treatises on religion issued from the press, especially on the vital theme of justification by faith, and its essential connection with sanctification ; the dry ethical style of preaching sunk into disrepute, while the plain searching manner was revived ; students of divinity were examined with greater care, by which means unfit persons were kept out of the churches, and prevented from fleecing the flock which they could not feed ; the points in which Christians differ were less insisted on, and different communions joined to promote the religion of the heart ; hence the knowledge of the Scriptures was amazingly increased among all ranks ; the vanity of a mere external profession was exposed ; the courts of princes were penetrated by the vital savour, and even princes, priests, and soldiers were among the converts to spiritual religion ; many sinful practices have been suppressed ; the theatre and other nurseries of vice were discountenanced ; the spirit of genuine charity has been revived, attending to the haunts of the poor in such a way as to render the relief afforded to their bodies subservient to the salvation of their souls ; while the Scriptures were tran-

slated into foreign languages, and missions established for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts. Who can hesitate to recognise here the features of a genuine revival of religion ?

Amidst these things, professor Frank commenced his orphan house at Glaucha, of which information was given to the English public, in the year one thousand seven hundred and five, in a book, entitled *Pietas Hallensis*, by A. W. Boehm, chaplain to his royal highness George prince of Denmark, and recommended by Drs. Woodward and Kennet. It originated in a custom of relieving poor children at the door of each inhabitant of the towns, one day in the week, of which professor Frank availed himself, first to afford them religious instruction, and afterwards to receive them into his house, which led to the establishment of a public building for poor children. This institution, which was literally begun in faith, without any visible funds for its support, was so remarkably favoured with the smiles of heaven, that its history records some most surprising and delightful occurrences, which must melt and warm the heart of every Christian.

In the countries which owned the supremacy of the Pope, some religion subsisted ; though, like an exotic plant, languishing amidst the disadvantages of unfavourable soil and climate. The pontiffs who occupied St. Peter's chair, from the revolution in England to the accession of the house of Hanover, were numerous. Odeschalchi reigned at Rome, under the title of Innocent the eleventh, when king James the second was mad enough to send an embassy to reconcile his kingdom to the holy see ; though his infallibility was so ignorant as to need a master to teach him the little Latin which was necessary in order to

the country, where oppression followed them, embittered their spirits, and drove some into rebellion. Claude Brousson, whose eloquent preaching gained him great esteem in the countries where he had taken refuge, returned to France, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-eight, and was there condemned and broken upon the wheel ; not only for preaching, but for corresponding with the enemies of the state.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and three, an Abbé, who was inspector of missions, not for the conversion of heathens, but of protestants, obtained an order from the court to shut up in a convent two daughters of a gentleman who had been newly converted to the protestant faith. Instead of conducting the ladies to a convent, he conveyed them to his own seat. The Calvinists, well aware what kind of celibacy and aversion to women prevailed among the Roman clergy, assembled in crowds, broke open the doors, rescued the ladies, and dispatched the Abbé, who refused to save his life by changing his religion". This kindled a civil war, which raged with various success, till it ended in a compromise between the two parties. Still, however, the protestants in Languedoc and Dauphiné continued in arms, till they proved, that " they who take the sword, perish by the sword." It must, however, be recollected, that while Louis tortured his subjects, he prevented them from escaping out of his kingdom by a strong cordon of troops ; so that it was a grand hunt in a vast enclosure. Who can wonder that men, thus hunted to madness should spring upon their pursuers ?

But while Louis the fourteenth was persecuting the Calvinistic heresy, as he termed it, it was springing up in the bosom of that church, of which he was the first-

born son. M. Arnaud defended the sentiments which Jansenius, bishop of Ypres, had published, in a book, entitled *Augustinus*. But as the jesuits induced the pope to anathematise these sentiments, Arnaud was obliged to hide himself from the storm, and at last died in exile. But the controversy called forth the almost miraculous powers of the celebrated Pascal, whose Provincial letters attacked the jesuits with argument unanswerable, which was rendered victorious by irony so delicate and pleasant, that Voltaire might justly say, "no comedy of Moliere contains so much exquisite diversion." But though the jesuits were rendered ridiculous, and could never recover from the shock, they had popes and kings at their command, and raised a persecution which crushed the Jansenists, the best part of the catholic church.

Madame de la Mothe Guyon, a young widow, having devoted herself to Quietism, which may be called catholic quakerism, now published a book, entitled a *Short method of Prayer*, for which, and other steps, she was placed in confinement. The celebrated Fenelon espoused her cause, which was opposed by the no less renowned Bossuet. Here again the worse party prevailed over the better; for Madame Guyon, who, with all her mysticism meant well, and had more religion than the rest of her communion, was immured in a prison; and the author of *Telemachus*, who was far superior to the bishop of Meaux, had the mortification of finding his book in defence of Guyon's sentiments, condemned by the pope. Such was his implicit devotion to the holy see, that the archbishop ascended his pulpit at Cambray, and publicly condemned his own book, forbidding his friends to undertake the defence of it; while his sentiments were most probably unchanged, though some dextrous dis-

/ tinction rendered this submission digestible, and thus enabled him to rob his enemies of their victory, and to save himself from the loss of his bishopric.

Spain, degraded by the apathy which is of the essence of her superior catholicism and devotion to papal infallibility, affords nothing worthy of remark, except the name of Michael Molino be deemed entitled to attention. He was a Spanish jesuit, who vainly attempted to strike out a middle path between the calvinistic and arminian systems; but as Janse-  
nius in France was condemned for a Calvinist, Molino was, by similar intrigues of an opposite party, anathematised for pelagianism. He distinguished between predestination to grace and to glory; so that, by means of a middle knowledge in God, which foresees what use men would make of grace, he supposed the decree of election to glory passed consistently with human deserts. With this he associated a contemplative devotional life, and revived the spirit and sentiments of the ancient mystic theology, in a book, called the Spiritual Guide; which being very obscure, may be thought learned and profound; and being far remote from every thing on earth, may be judged nearly allied to heaven. But his treatise, which has been put into the hands which write this page, by a respectable quaker, and bears a strong resemblance to some of the writings of that society, serves only to shew the vast superiority of the New Testament, which renders men spiritual but not mystical.

Austria furnished, at this period, divines who distinguished themselves by zealous exertions to restore the protestants to the bosom of the catholic church. But though they promised fair, proposing a new general council instead of that of Trent, the marriage of the priests, communion in both kinds, security of ec-

clesiastical possessions, and freedom from the name of heretics (provided the protestants would abstain from calling the pope antichrist), the reformed were not silly enough to be drawn into the snare. The emperor Leopold, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-one, published an edict, inviting the two parties to a conference, in order to a reconciliation. To which the German protestants replied, that it was not for those of one country to determine on this measure, which affected the reformed all over the world; and that such an union was not to be hoped for, as it had often been tried, but always unsuccessfully. The zeal which the papists displayed, was, however, at once a reproach and a punishment for the lukewarmness of the protestants, who, contented with their acquisitions, and ceasing to labour for the conversion of their enemies, invited the war into their own territories.

The Greek church existed only in ruins, where it once flourished in false glory; for Constantinople, and other countries within its pale, were now under the dominion of the Turks, the scourge of the human race. But when the Russian empire rose to an elevated rank among the powers of Europe, its religion, which is that of the Greek church, partook of the elevation. On the whole, they have a species of Christianity not much better than heathenism, more superstitious and less enlightened than popery. But even here, the writings, labours, and spirit of the pietists have been diffused and extended as far as Siberia. The New Testament and Arndt's True Christianity were printed in modern Greek, and in the Sclavonian tongue.

In the Turkish empire, the delusions of Mahomet have turned the fairest portion of the globe, the scite of the first churches of Christ, into a desolate wilderness.



Africa was, in the north, overruñ with Mahometari darkness, and in the south by pagan superstition ; while the east retained, in Egypt and Abyssinia, nothing of Christianity but the name. The southern half of America, held by Spain and Portugal, was, like these countries, cursed with the grossest popery.

In Asia, vile brahmanic idolatry and Mahometan superstition long struggled for the ascendant ; while no other Christians but the equivocal church of St. Thomas existed in that vast continent, till the Danish mission was established at Tranquebar, on the Coromandel coast. The missionaries, who were from the pietist university at Halle, printed the New Testament in the Malabarian tongue. They had erected, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirteen, several places of worship, and baptised two hundred and seven converts. The intelligence of their labours and success, diffused the liveliest joy among all the genuine disciples of Christ throughout Europe.

In China, where a third of the human race had for ages been shut out of the knowledge of the only Redeemer, three Italian jesuits at length introduced their popish Christianity. Matthew Ricci was, for a time, left alone in the vast field, which he is said to have cultivated with distinguished prudence, diligence, and success. He, however, so far indulged his equivocal converts in pagan rites, as to shock the more rigid catholics, who sent some dominican and franciscan friars to protest against these jesuit practices. An ecclesiastico-civil war was thus kindled, both in Europe and in China ; but the jesuits pursued their own plans, and so far succeeded as to gain over the emperor of China, who, in the year one thousand six hundred and ninety-two, tolerated the Christian religion in his vast dominions.

END OF VOL. II.

[Printed by R. Tilling, Newport, Isle of Wight.]

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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".



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